

TOP SECRET: THE PROPHECY THE PRESIDENT REJECTED

"Once on the tiger's back we cannot be sure of picking the place to dismount." George Ball, Oct. 5, 1964

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AGING IN THE LAND OF THE YOUNG by Sharon Curtin



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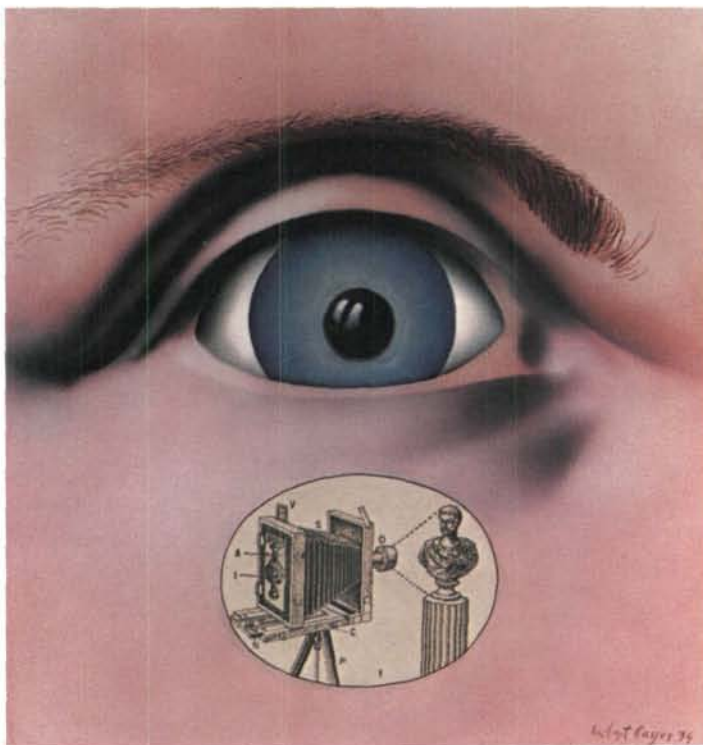
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The ideal

We must teach our children not only what to see but *how* to see.



artist: herbert bayer (1934)

The real

Too often we try to educate by preaching orthodoxies. But orthodox solutions are no longer enough.

Our world is changing faster than ever before while many of our educational premises remain static, mired in the past.

But the past no longer has enough of the answers. In the years ahead, problems will arise for which there are no precedents. To keep the future

open we must teach our children not only what to learn but *how* to learn, *how* to see, *how* to analyze.

Only then will they be able to recognize and cope with problems which our generation cannot even foresee.
AtlanticRichfieldCompany ♦



artist: jasper johns

Why a \$2,000 Volkswagen* costs a lot less than any other \$2,000 car.

Listen to the logic:

Give or take a few dollars, most new economy cars are priced just about the same these days.

Around \$2,000.

But when you sell it, a weird thing happens. Some are worth more to you than others.

And based on what's happened in the past, after 3 or 4 years, not one is worth more cash than you-know-who:

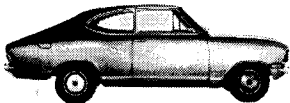
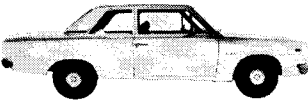
The Volkswagen Beetle.†

So the real price you pay for a car is the difference between what you pay now and what you get back later, when you sell it.

Anyhow, take a good look at the chart on the right. It'll give you an idea of the average retail depreciation of some famous 1969 economy cars. Based on prices they were sold for by Used Car Dealers in Jan., 1972.

Remember, it's one thing to say today, "I just bought the lowest-priced car in town."

It's another thing tomorrow to say, "I just sold the lowest-priced car in town."

Who lost the least?†	Depreciation of retail sales price as of Jan., 1972.
 1969 Nova-4 Sedan 2 Dr.	-\$814
 1969 Opel 2 Dr. Sedan	-\$812
 1969 Datsun PL 510 2 Dr.	-\$736
 1969 Rambler American 6 Cyl. 2 Dr.	-\$723
 1969 Toyota Corolla Sedan 2 Dr.	-\$686
 1969 Volkswagen 113	-\$449

*1972 VOLKSWAGEN SEDAN 111 SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE, P.O.E., LOCAL TAXES AND OTHER DEALER CHARGES, IF ANY, ADDITIONAL. ©VOLKSWAGEN OF AMERICA, INC.

†SOURCE: 1969 MANUFACTURERS' SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICES AND 1972 AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES AS QUOTED IN NADA OFFICIAL USED CAR GUIDE, EASTERN EDITION, JAN., 1972.



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We even crush it for you.



And if that's not enough, we also give you cold water.

Now General Electric offers a refrigerator that does all three—all without opening the door.

With our Custom Dispenser, you just press a cradle on the front of the door and get all the crushed ice you want—a glassful or a whole ice bucketful. And you don't warm up the freezer with a lot of door opening, either.

Ice cubes? As easy as sliding the lever to "Cubes." You never have to juggle the

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And to make things easier yet, the icemaker automatically replaces ice as you use it.

For instant chilled water, press the other cradle. Or if you want, use both at once.

Our Custom Dispenser refrigerators also feature tempered glass shelves that adjust to your storage needs; and since they're solid, spills never drip through. (Wiping up is a snap.)

In addition, they come with a seven-day meat keeper that keeps unfrozen meat fresh for

a week or becomes an extra vegetable storage drawer with one flip of a switch.

And these models never need defrosting—not even in the biggest freezer section, which has an 8.6 cubic foot capacity.

Our biggest refrigerator with the Custom Dispenser packs 23.6 cubic feet of cool into a mere 35 3/4 inches of width. Or maybe the 21.6 cubic foot model is more your size—it serves up ice cubes or crushed ice, and measures only 33 inches wide.

Customer Care Service Everywhere.

This is our pledge that wherever you are, or go, you'll find an authorized GE serviceman nearby.



Model TFF24RN

GENERAL  ELECTRIC

THE ATLANTIC

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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

A card from an old friend arrived in the mail the other day. Like a forgotten letter fallen from the pages of a long neglected book, the postmark SALAMANCA, N.Y., brought back memories of a dead and unsung era in communications. Salamanca was one of five towns in western New York whose newspapers got their daily budgets of major news by means of the regional “pony circuit” of the Associated Press. The modern-day network of leased wires and high-speed teletype transmission of news was well established by then—1942, that is—but in upstate New York (as in several other parts of the country), small dailies afflicted with limited resources and/or parsimony got the top news of the day by means of daily prearranged telephone calls.

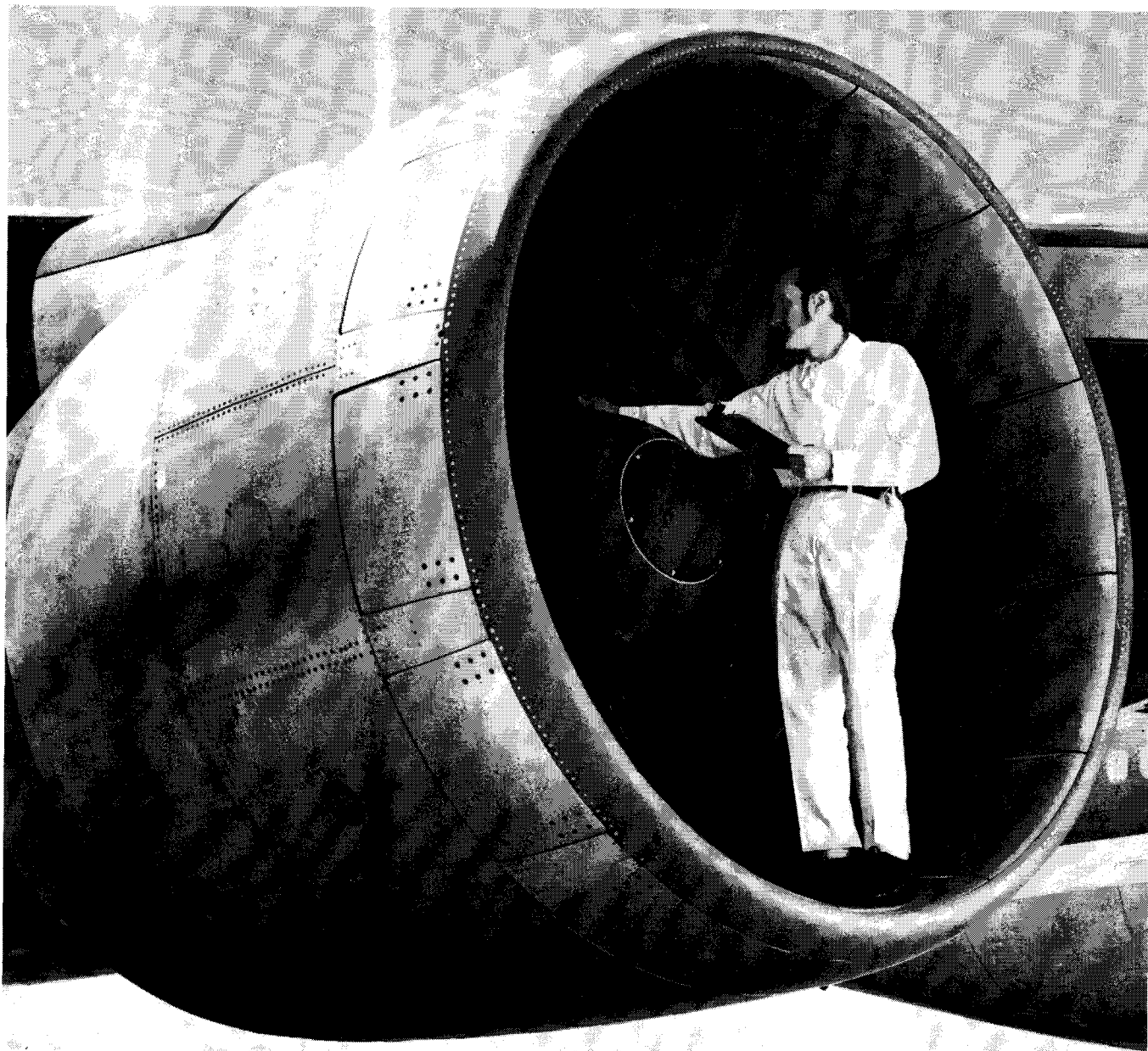
The “pony circuit” was so named, I presume, because it corresponded in mid-twentieth century context to the way the mail was delivered in the Old West. Anyway, by the time I went to the AP’s Buffalo bureau in 1942 as No. 3 of a three-man staff, the “pony” was the major connection to the outside world for the daily newspapers in Salamanca, Batavia, Canandaigua, Geneva, and Wellsville. Every day but Sunday, an editor would sit at a typewriter in each of those towns and type out news dictated over two daily prearranged telephone hookups with Buffalo. It fell to the humble No. 3 man to assemble each day’s major news into two bundles, one of ten minutes to be transmitted at 10:30, a second of fifteen minutes for the 1:15 call, and then to dictate it to the clients.

Time was precious. The clients paid heavily by their standards, and they wanted every second, every word to count. There was a war on, so a lot of the news slipped easily into place. Corregidor falls. The U.S. Marines take Guadalcanal. General Doolittle’s Bombers hit Tokyo. But the rest of the selection was far from simple. Small though they were, the “pony circuit” clients were among the AP’s most demanding. Salamanca was a two-front man, but Batavia was a Pacific war man. The lady in Wellsville became incensed at the mention of the name Roosevelt or Pope Pius, and her sputters of rage, should one of those unmentionable names profane the air, would blot out valuable interludes of the conference call. The fellow in Canandaigua had an inordinate inter-

est in the livestock and grain futures, while the need to spell out frequently used words—subpoena, Guadalcanal, Pétain, Ickes—for the slow-witted substitute editor at Geneva would drive the others, particularly the Salamanca man, up the wall. So No. 3 man chose and edited with care, even, let us confess it, with guile, for it became his consuming compulsion to pack into those twenty-five minutes every weekday the sense of the world as it was at that instant. (Pinning the butterflies of history to the board, eh, Nabokov?) So, for purposes of convenience, FDR usually became the President, or the Chief Executive, or simply the White House; Pius XII was the Vicar of Christ (though that didn’t help much). The idiosyncrasies of the other editors were avoided or catered to in similarly cowardly ways.

First the hasty roll call: Salamanca? “Here.” Canandaigua? “HERE” (Feodor Chaliapin perhaps?). Geneva? “Aye!” Wellsville? “Heeeeeeere” (a voice out of the opening scene of *Macbeth*). Batavia? “Check.” And then, carefully enunciated, paced to the typing speed of the five disembodied voices, always with regard to the eccentricities and predilections at the other ends of the line, sometimes with the sense of drama, but mostly with a let’s-get-on-with-it intensity—the NEWS. For the greater part of a year, the No. 3 man and the “pony circuit” clients pinned the butterflies to the board. When time came for a new assignment, it brought a definite tug of regret. Still the temptation could not be resisted. On one autumn day in 1942, came the last of my “pony” wire calls. Once the roll call was over, the news that day included *two* announcements by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, one item about his wife, another about his son Elliott, and—oh, devilish delight!—even a stray item about President Roosevelt’s special envoy to the Vatican, Myron Taylor, and his audience with Pope Pius XII. You couldn’t hear the news for the static. But near the end I heard the man in Salamanca laughing. Also the fellow in Batavia. I hope even the lady in Wellsville found it possible to smile. But I’ll never know.

Robert Manning



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REPORTS & COMMENT

FRANCE

France enters the fourth year of the Pompidou era in an atmosphere of national composure and repose which this volatile nation has seldom realized in this century. This does not mean that the country is complacent, or that everything is going well, or that there has been a hiatus in the direction of French affairs. But under President Georges Pompidou a plateau has been reached. France is a nation at peace within itself, secure among its neighbors, buoyant in its economy, calm in its political life, enjoying good relations with just about every nation on the globe, and is divested of either excessive responsibilities or excessive ambitions in the world. Few great states if any today have achieved such a combination of national equanimity and vitality.

Much of this France owes to General Charles de Gaulle. But De Gaulle never brought to France the particular repose which it now has under Pompidou. The first half of the De Gaulle era was torn by the Algerian war, and the second half was finally punctured by the catastrophic street uprisings and general strike of May-June, 1968. In between, far from encouraging repose, De Gaulle was constantly exhorting his nation to follow him to some eighteenth- or nineteenth-century pinnacle of grandeur and greatness. In the end, De Gaulle's real legacy to the country was not grandeur but stability, and the creation of a strong constitutional presidency filled by direct election.

On this foundation, Pompidou has built with remarkable political skill and success in the last three years. He learned the workings of govern-

ment well as Premier during the seven years (1961-1968) that De Gaulle wielded the powers of the presidency. But De Gaulle could ignore the mundane problems of power and politics and rely on his "communion with the French people" and his historic role in France in order to dominate the scene—at any rate, up until his last referendum. Pompidou, knowing full well that any attempt at emulation of De Gaulle would look ridiculous, has set about creating a different power base by paying far more attention to the nuts and bolts of government policy and administration and taking a great deal more care for political feelings and interests and reactions in the country at large. With his experience, his intelligence, his political know-how, his pragmatism, and his "low profile," he has in fact emerged as a President with a much broader and deeper grip on French affairs than De Gaulle had toward the end of his career.

Above all, Pompidou is far more modern in his outlook than was De Gaulle. In his approach to both internal and external policies for France, he is totally unconcerned with the kind of ideological concepts which propelled De Gaulle to demonstrate constantly that France was a Power With a Role in world affairs. On the home front, bearers of bad tidings to De Gaulle were about as comfortable as if they were dealing with a Greek king, and issues like the growing drug problem, labor troubles, and student unrest were consistently ignored or brushed aside. In foreign affairs, as far as France's traditional friends and allies were concerned, Gaullist policy was largely a process of sticking fingers in other people's eyes in order to prove French independence.

Pompidou has allowed the Gaullist excesses to fade quietly away, while at the same time proclaiming constantly that goals of true Gaullism continue to guide his policies and France's destiny. Like Marx and the Bible, Gaullist texts are flexible. Thus, the entry of Britain into the European Common Market, unthinkable in De Gaulle's time, has now been presented by Pompidou to the National Assembly and the nation quite sensibly as "witness to our faith in France's greatness within a Europe master of its own destiny." Meanwhile, Quebec is scarcely mentioned in France anymore except with a certain embarrassment. Israel has its money back on those Mirage airplanes which De Gaulle had impounded; the Comédie Française has visited Jerusalem; and a new School of French Studies has been opened at Hebrew University. France has found a way of putting up some money for United Nations peacekeeping operations which De Gaulle once scorned. The French miraculously sell arms to both South Africa and black Africa. Pompidou is less enthusiastic than De Gaulle was about finding happiness with the Soviet Union; but if relations are not quite as close, they are still as good as those which any other Western power enjoys. Even within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization the atmosphere is markedly more relaxed and cooperative—though on matters of military cooperation, there is still a long way to go.

Crow

At the same time, Pompidou could not have been more Gaullist in his direction of French policy during the 1971 monetary crisis. He was more

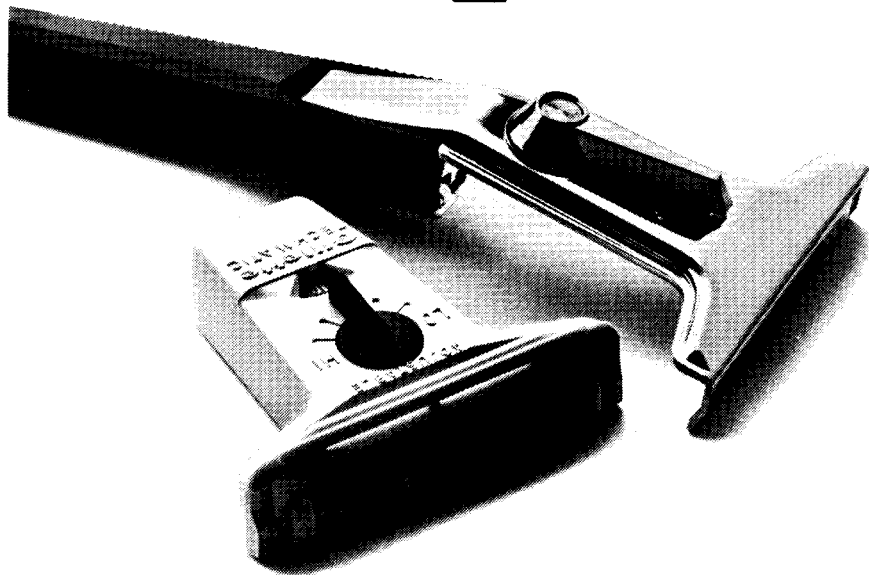


polite and less annoying than De Gaulle probably would have been, but he was no less clear, firm, and unyielding. At the outset, when President Nixon announced his crash "defend-the-dollar" measures last August, Pompidou's response was that the dollar had to be devalued, the price of gold had to be increased, and that France, in any case, would flatly refuse to "float" its currency or change its parity in order to help the Americans out of difficulties of their own making. Pure Gaullism.

Having taken a firm position, Pompidou left it up to his ambitious young finance minister, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, to carry the ball unyieldingly in the deliberations of the European Common Market and the Group of Ten. He himself sat back quietly to wait for events to come to him—as they eventually did when President Nixon sought a summit meeting in the Azores in mid-December. By that time, Treasury Secretary John Connally's bluster was becoming more and more windy, and Pompidou got Nixon to commit himself publicly at the end of the Azores meeting to devaluation of the dollar. Can anybody imagine Nixon or any other American President having come to a meeting with General de Gaulle and coming out humbly announcing devaluation of the dollar? This is a pretty fair measure of the relative effectiveness of De Gaulle and Pompidou, at least in dealings with the United States, and Pompidou naturally had the good grace and political common sense not to go home and engage in any crowing talk about a French victory. He let the facts speak for themselves.

Moreover, by the time the Smithsonian monetary agreement was locked up in mid-December, the French, through Pompidou's cool direction, in barely two years had gained a whopping 23 percent improvement in the ratio between the franc and the West German deutsche mark, which is far more important than the dollar to French trade and economy. First came Pompidou's devaluation of the franc in 1969, while the Germans stood still, and then came the upward revaluation of the mark while the French stood still. French exports, which shot up by 15 percent in 1971, soared another 14 percent higher in the first quarter of 1972, and both growth rate and inflation are now

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FRANCE

about as well balanced as economic management ever renders them. Very careful expansion measures, such as interest-rate reductions and increased public expenditures, are under way, and unemployment is beginning to drop. Regional soft spots in the economy are the biggest worry—but Pompidou knows this too.

In short, he has brought his own repose to France, but at the same time he is giving France firm leadership. If his own ambitions and objectives for France are more restrained and limited than General de Gaulle's, they are also more practical and therefore more effective. After the Smithsonian agreements, Pompidou moved immediately to give French leadership to the project of a Common Market program for a European monetary union. The ultimate goal is a Europe with its own reserve currency dealing with the United States as a monetary equal. For De Gaulle it would have been anathema to submit French currency to the workings of a monetary union; but for Pompidou it is a mat-

ter of constructing a monetary union in such a way that France can assert a dominant role. His experience in guiding French policy through the Smithsonian agreements must reinforce his feeling that this is both practical and possible.

No passion, no emotion

Although Pompidou has been in the public eye in France for more than a decade, he still remains relatively elusive and unknown—a mixture of secrecy and openness, enigma and clarity, caution and decisiveness. He looks, as has been remarked before in France, like a Monte Carlo croupier, a slightly bemused smile playing on his lips, but his eyes shrewdly watching, intelligent, cold, and hard. His great strength in political tactics and leadership is his ability to wait—to avoid impetuous decisions and to let events come to him. Like De Gaulle, he holds about two press conferences a year, makes three or four television appearances, and forays out into the country on regional tours. But his effectiveness lies in what he does, not in what he says.

In fact, various French political observers think that the biggest political danger which Pompidou faces is that the French are likely to get bored with him. There was clear warning of this in the way the voters failed to respond to his April referendum welcoming Britain, Norway, Denmark, and Eire into the Common Market. When he announced the referendum at a press conference in mid-March, it looked like a political masterstroke—using a favorite Gaullist device to wipe out an old Gaullist policy, splitting the French political left, and obtaining a direct popular endorsement of presidential policy-making.

The only trouble was that Frenchmen stayed away from the polls en masse—40 percent abstention, the highest in any polling since the war. Of those who voted, the result was only barely satisfactory, with 67 percent yes and 33 percent no, and the yes percentage of the total electorate was barely 36 percent. As Michel Debré, Pompidou's ultra-Gaullist Minister of Defense, remarked late in the evening of the vote, "Neither passion nor emotion was aroused."

On balance, however, Pompidou did succeed in splitting the left in France. The Communists came out in open opposition to enlarging the Common Market, while the Socialists urged their followers simply to abstain. He did not succeed by a long shot in getting a turnout which could be claimed as some plebiscite endorsement of his leadership. But he had never himself laid his own prestige on the line in urging the voters to vote during the brief campaign, and he has easily shrugged off the meager outcome as of little ultimate political importance. However, it has certainly cooled Pompidou's enthusiasm for emulating De Gaulle's tactic of calling national referenda, and it probably has reinforced his determination to give his government a thorough new look before National Assembly elections are held next spring.

In any case, Jacques Chaban-Delmas, the handsome, extroverted, tennis-playing Premier, has worked himself into an uncomfortably expendable position by engaging in a wholly legal but unwise tax fiddle, taking advantage of a loophole to write off earnings and emerging tax-free for four years. Tax evasion is not generally regarded as a mortal sin in France, but this did nei-

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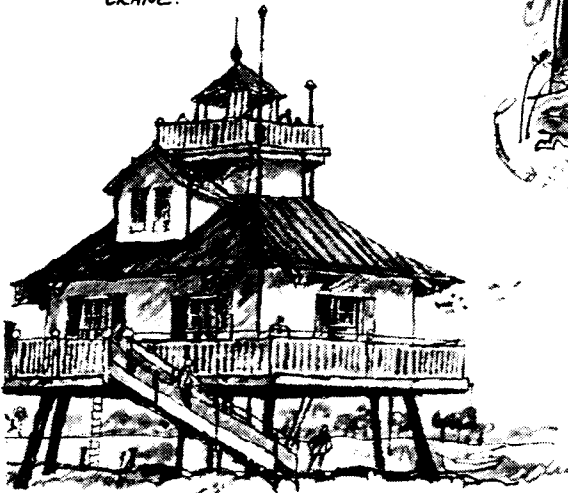
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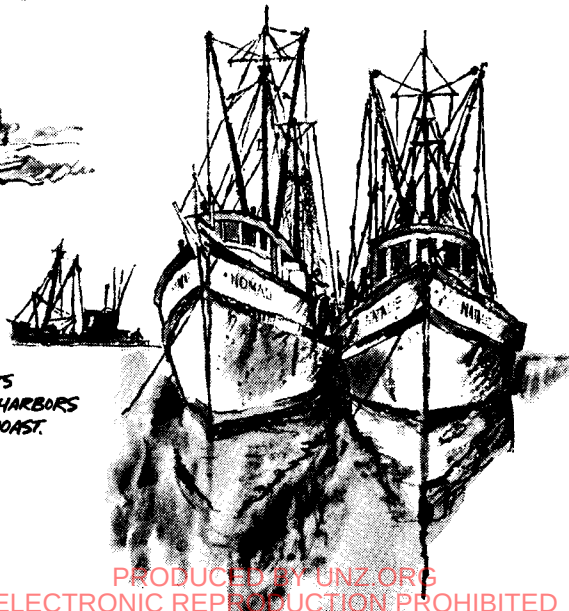
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ther the Premier nor the government much good in the public image. For the time being, it has been explained away, and Chaban-Delmas has received a cool reindorsement of confidence from Pompidou. But it is clearly only a matter of time before Pompidou decides that the moment has come to reshuffle.

Looking out across the French scene from the Elysée Palace, Pompidou can identify plenty of national problems but no real political threats. He has made a start on regional reform, the referendum issue which ended De Gaulle's rule. He has avoided massive labor troubles in the last three years and has steadily increased the minimum national wage scale. He has increased public spending, and the visible effects of construction are there to be seen all over France. A handful of ultra-Gaullists have deserted him resentfully on the right, but he holds an enormous majority in the National Assembly, and he probably will not give the parties of the left much opportunity to unite against him. He does not have Heath's problem in Ulster, Nixon's problem in Vietnam, Brandt's problem of a tiny Bundestag majority, or the Italian problem of fragmentation. He has a European summit conference coming up in Paris in October, when he can and will play a dominant role in shaping policies and objectives for the enlarged European Common Market in the years immediately ahead.

"Of course the French will get bored with him," one Frenchman remarked, "but not so bored that they will defeat him at the end of his first seven years, or stage a revolution and throw him out before the end of his second seven years. He'll be around longer than De Gaulle was."

—DON COOK

ITALY

The Feltrinelli Case

In the second year of Italy's worst economic recession since the war, the country was coming uncomfortably close politically to a nervous breakdown. Parliament had just been dissolved a year ahead of time, a confession of governmental impotence unequaled since the advent of Fascism. A decade's experiment in center-left rule had proved to be an in-

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Sometime this summer, somewhere, chances are there'll be serious power failures. Wheels will slow down or stop . . . lights will dim or go out . . . all the things we rely on electricity to run will fall silent and useless.

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For some time we of America's rural electric systems—a small but vital part of the power industry—have been pointing out the need for a national fuels and energy policy. Now, as our country's energy crisis nears the danger point, we urge, as part of a national effort to solve it, *priority action for:*

—nationwide interconnections of high-voltage power lines to form a grid that can shuttle electricity swiftly from one area of the country to another . . . from where it's needed least to where it's needed most.

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ITALY

glorious flop. The safety margin for all democratic parties combined was contracting steadily, cut down by the Communist Party and far left *gruppuscules* on one side, and the neo-Fascist Italian Social Movement (MSI) flanked by "black terrorists" on the other. The MSI in particular had made nerve-racking gains in partial administrative elections the previous June, mostly at the expense of the dominant Christian Democratic Party.

Meanwhile, the nation's social fabric seemed to be disintegrating. Crime rates were shooting up. Some student *contestatori* seemed to spend most of their time making Molotov cocktails ("Our daily bread," one said) and the rest throwing them. Bombs kept going off all over the country at the rate of one a day. Wildcat strikes were breaking world records for the third year running. Any suggestion that the country might pull itself together again under some new version of the same old government tended to provoke a certain hilarity. People were saying it wouldn't be long now before the Communists took over, or the Fascists, or more likely "the colonels," with Hellenic blessings.

Then, suddenly, after all the talk of breakdown, the electorate was confronted with a crisply efficient government cracking down on deadly conspirators.

Accidents happen

On March 16, just as Italians were settling down for the long rhetorical haul leading to elections on May 7, the morning papers reported the discovery of a burned and mutilated body beneath a high-tension pylon in Segrate, on the bleak northern outskirts of Milan. The pylon, splattered with blood and torn flesh, was taped with forty-three sticks of dynamite. Another stick seemed to have blown up in the man's hands, hurling him heavily to the ground. The force of the explosion had flung one of his legs ten yards away, and bits of bone as far as fifty yards.

At first the story did not cause much of a stir. Terrorist attempts of all sorts have averaged about one a day in Italy for the last three years,

and accidents happen. Twenty-four hours later, though, the nation was stunned to learn that the dead man had been identified as Milan's millionaire guerrilla publisher, Giangiacomo Feltrinelli. Premier Giulio Andreotti and his Minister of Interior, the police, the *carabinieri*, the Army's counterespionage service (SID) leaped into action. Roadblocks went up all across the North. Hundreds of raids were made on the homes and hideouts of right-wing and left-wing extremists in Milan, Turin, Genoa, Rome. Dozens of people were picked up for questioning. Seven thousand machine guns and other weapons, six tons of explosives, a million Molotov cocktails and other homemade bombs, sinister coded documents, and marked terrorist maps kept turning up in the police dragnet. For seven weeks running—until the elections, in fact—vigilant champions of democratic law and order saw to it that the case made front-page headlines daily. Alive, Feltrinelli had done his obsessive best to destroy the Establishment he detested. In death, he could hardly have been more helpful.

Italians will probably never know how he died. "No crime involving political power in Italy can touch the shores of truth," says the distinguished Sicilian novelist Leonardo Sciascia, and the shores are barely visible through the fog shrouding this one. Nevertheless, some astonishing evidence has come to light.

There is not enough evidence to establish whether Feltrinelli accidentally touched off the explosion that killed him, or whether somebody else obligingly did it for him. Predictably, Italy's left-wing intellectuals have insisted from the start that he was murdered: by police agents, by Fascists, by the CIA, by "international reaction." "What proof do I have?" demanded *L'Espresso's* correspondent Camilla Cederna. "But what does that matter, in such a moment of extreme electoral tension? The proof will come along later." With or without the proof, though, there can be no mistaking Feltrinelli's intentions. He drove to Segrate fully conscious, undrugged, and climbed twelve feet up the pylon, as his fingerprints and bloodstains testify. Not only did he mean to blow it up, with at least one and more likely two accomplices; that was just the beginning.

At San Vito di Gaggiano, on the other side of Milan, police found another high-tension pylon taped in the same way with the same dynamite (a product called Dynamon), unexploded only because of a fluke in the battery-wired timer. In the Volkswagen camper Feltrinelli had driven to Segrate were maps of all Northern Italy marked with crosses and arrows at the sites of other strategic electric pylons, bridges, airports, military barracks. In his hideout, later discovered by police in a working-class Milan suburb, was an arsenal of revolvers, machine guns and several thousand rounds of ammunition, more dynamite, detonators, forged passports, cartons of coded correspondence, and a long letter to an unknown "Saetta," with Feltrinelli's handwritten notes in the margin, proposing the formation of a joint high command throughout the Italian North for an underground liberation army.

Beyond *La Sinistra*

Lest the meaning of all this be in doubt, the Milan police turned up still more scorching evidence just five days before the elections, in a spectacular predawn raid on two underground bunkers. One was yet another and bigger arsenal with enough weapons and ammunition to equip a small army: gas masks and antitank mines, two hundred pounds of Dynamon along with 46 detonators and 250 yards of fuse. Among the other contents of the second bunker—along with Feltrinelli's authentic passport—were four hundred false identity cards and several perfectly copied city seals to stamp them; four powerful radio receivers tuned in to the police wavelength and several walkie-talkies; a lengthy list of candidates for kidnapping from the world of politics, industry, and finance, two of them marked for death sentences; and below a trapdoor, a six-by-nine-foot People's Prison for these intended victims, stoutly built, padded, and soundproofed, equipped with a hidden microphone, a Magic Eye peephole, and handcuffs. From all this and suitcases full of documents carted off by the police, it was clear that Feltrinelli was up to his neck in preparations for an armed uprising.

For a while, his countrymen could not believe it. Until he died, Feltrinelli could never quite persuade them

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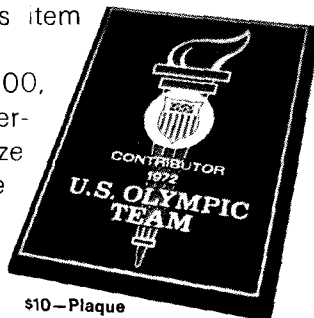
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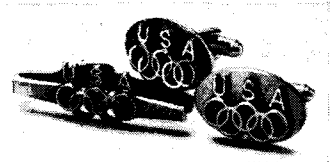
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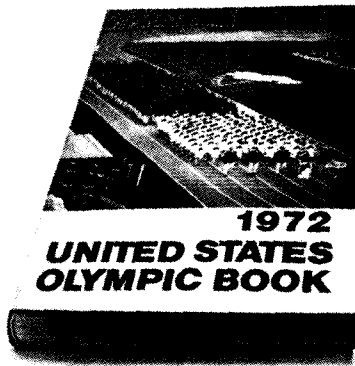
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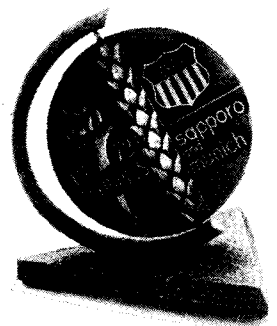
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ITALY

to take him seriously as an iron revolutionary. Ardent, yes. His publishing house had been in the red for years, despite the spectacular success of *Dr. Zhivago* and *The Leopard*, largely because he persisted in printing so many unsalable radical tracts. He had long been the sugar daddy of far-left fringe groups, who treated him as sugar daddies are usually treated. He was a passionate admirer of Fidel Castro, founded Europe's first pro-Castro review, *Tricontinental*, set up a "Centrale" in Zurich to coordinate the movement's operations in South America, Spain, Portugal, Britain, France, and especially Germany, where he was particularly close to the nihilist band of Andreas Baeder, heavily infiltrated with Fascists.

He was an even greater admirer of Che Guevara, and had flown to Bolivia for Régis Debray's trial only to be promptly jailed and expelled. He was clearly carried away by the exemplary ferocity of Uruguay's *tupamaros*, whose manner of dress he adopted toward the last. He had dreamed of turning sere, poverty-ridden Sardinia into a Mediterranean Cuba, offering arms and money to the bandit-outlaw Graziano Mesina to lead a separatist movement; but Mesina did not appear to grasp the idea. He had pinned his hopes for a while on the student *contestatori*. In the spring of 1968, when they were occupying practically all of Italy's universities and flying thirty-foot Maoist flags from the mastheads, his newspaper *La Sinistra* ("The Left") was the first to feature detailed front-page instructions on how to make a Molotov cocktail. In the end, disillusioned with most of them and nearly everyone else, he was talking to a smaller and smaller audience of his final, flaming vision: "In every corner of Italy, a Vietnam."

Yet almost nobody suspected him of straying further leftward organizationally than "Potere Operaio" ("Workers' Power"), a semiclandestine band specializing in street fighting, which any outsider might find leftist enough. A week after his death, however, leaders of the "Potere Operaio" revealed in a remarkable press conference that Feltrinelli wasn't their man after all. He wasn't just a crackpot millionaire either, they said. On the

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ITALY

contrary, he was a "militant Communist" (meaning that he had long since left the Italian Communist Party in disgust), who had founded the fearsome underground GAP (Partisan Action Groups), to whose needs he had adapted himself "as skin to flesh."

Only vaguely aware of GAP's existence until then, an enthralled public thereupon got an earful. Leftward of "Potere Operaio," as Italians have now discovered, lies an eerie political underworld where ex-Communists and anarchists, police spies and *agents provocateurs*, Fascists, ex-Fascists, lumpenproletariat, and common crooks commingle in a cult of terror. There seem to be dozens of such groups: the "Red Brigades" and "Cannossi Brigades" in Milan, the "XXII October" band in Genoa (formed by a local leader of the neo-Fascist MSI, with far-left ex-Communist activists), the "XXII March" circle in Rome, "Proletarian Justice" in Padua, the "Dantedi Nanni" Brigade in Turin, the "FARO, M-L" ("Workers' Revolutionary Action Front, Marxist-Leninist") in Turin and Rome. It is not clear how many of these bands actually owe allegiance to GAP or simply work in tandem with it. An entry in Feltrinelli's diary shows, for instance, that he had an appointment for eight o'clock on the evening he died with two FARO leaders who may have been his accomplices at Segrate. (One is said to be a barber from Turin, now in police custody.) But whatever its relation to the others, GAP certainly enjoys authority among them.

Formed in September, 1970, to lead "an armed struggle against the bosses . . . and fascist pigs," GAP has recruited some five hundred followers by now. True to the promises broadcast over GAP's pirate radio, the organization is preparing for armed struggle all right. Its members, who are armed to the teeth, are kept in trim by a doctor comrade who prescribes a Spartan diet and long, brisk walks; they are trained in remote Apennine camps by German and South American military instructors using Carlos Marighela's *Manual of Guerrilla Warfare*. And they are committed to systematic terrorism: bombings and arson, kidnapping for money or political blackmail, killing

for atonement or simply as instructive exercise. Judging from material seized in police raids up and down the Peninsula, these are commonplace commitments for the circles Feltrinelli moved in.

Since its formation in 1970, GAP is known to have bombed, dynamited, or set fire to at least thirty Italian factories, army barracks, and *carabinieri* headquarters. The police are not yet sure how directly it may have been involved in some of the other groups' picaresque ventures: the kidnapping last March, by Milan's "Red Brigades," of a factory director whose photograph was sent to the press with two guns pressed to his temples; another kidnapping last year by the Genoa "XXII October" band netting over \$300,000 in ransom; an armed robbery by the same band in which a messenger boy was shot and killed. If GAP was not directly involved in these cases, it probably had some tie-in. The underground bunker where Feltrinelli's genuine passport was found had been set up by Milan's "Red Brigades," and one of the fugitives found hiding in Feltrinelli's Milan hideout, when police finally got

there, was the driver of the getaway motorbike used by the "XXII October" killer.

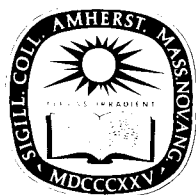
Whatever GAP had to do with those episodes, it has boasted publicly of the biggest coup of all: last year's assassination in Hamburg of Bolivian Consul Roberto Quintanilla, sentenced to death by GAP's kangaroo court for having hunted down and tortured Che Guevara. The fact that Feltrinelli's Colt Cobra was used for the shooting and left lying near the body doesn't necessarily prove his complicity; it might easily have been an attempt to frame him. But his connection with GAP's actions can scarcely be questioned. GAP itself proudly claimed him as its leader after death. So did its co-founder, a young Sardinian named Giuseppe Saba, another of Feltrinelli's presumed accomplices at Segrate. Trapped in the same Milan hideout when the police arrived after a Continental manhunt (and reaching for his gun seconds too late), Saba was asked why he had left the comparative safety of Switzerland or Germany and returned to Italy at the almost certain risk of capture. He could not

bear to see Feltrinelli's work die with the man, he answered. "I came back to carry on."

Furies

Why did Feltrinelli do it? His fellow Italians have speculated endlessly about this tormented soul, born to one of Milan's great families and endowed with one of the world's greatest fortunes, condemned to a frozen childhood under a succession of Teutonic governesses and his mother's wintry eye; nimble-minded but in no way talented, sexually restless (he had run through four wives and was said to be contemplating a fifth), compassionate but singularly gullible, evidently eaten with social guilt, driven by God knows what private Furies besides. The writer Sciascia speaks of him as "very ingenuous, very discontinuous, very disarmed." A former wife describes him as a "forty-five-year-old Boy Scout." Luigi Barzini, Jr., his stepfather during adolescence, suggests a Count of Monte Cristo complex.

As far as the Italian Establishment was concerned, though, all this dilet-



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ITALY

tante psychoanalysis was irrelevant. What mattered was not why Feltrinelli did what he did, but what he did.

Given as they are to politics by scandal, Italian politicians tend to be rather good at it. The Montesi Case of nearly twenty years ago, in which the mysterious death of an obscure girl helped to unseat the high command of the ruling Christian Democratic Party, was a classic example of its kind. The bomb that killed sixteen people in Milan's Bank of Agriculture on December 12, 1969, might have been another, if the police hadn't so unaccountably botched it. (Their first suspect, an anarchist named Pinelli, was declared officially, and improbably, to have jumped out of the window in an excess of repentance while police were questioning him. Their next suspect, another anarchist, Pietro Valpreda, has been kept in jail two and a half years awaiting trial, on the frail testimony of a single witness, now dead, whose evidence has been ruled out anyway.

In the heat of the recent electoral battle, two Fascists having no known connection with Valpreda were indicted on the same charge.)

But nobody blotted his copybook in the Feltrinelli case. The dead man's family had a representative at the autopsy, reporters were taken into the investigators' confidence, the police were quick, thorough, on their toes. Not for decades have Italy's governing politicians had such a windfall; they made the most of it.

Plainly, the authorities had known more about Feltrinelli's movements than they let on. A self-made fugitive since December 4, 1969 (he was wanted for questioning on false testimony concerning a bombing the previous spring, but there was no warrant out for him), he was one of the best-watched men on the Continent. The Bolivian secret police had an eye on him because of the Quintanilla killing in Hamburg; so, almost certainly, did the CIA because of all his other South American connections. The Swiss were keeping tabs on him because of his Zurich "Centrale" and multilateral arms traffic, the Israelis because he was procuring arms for George Habash's Palestine Liberation Front, the French because he was thought to be financing their outlaw "Proletarian Left," the Germans because of his intimacy with the terrorist Baeder Band, and of course, the Italians.

The Italian police and SID must have known, because there was hardly a Milanese who didn't, that he was commuting regularly to Italy on false passports from Switzerland, Germany, and a country home in Oberhof, Austria. They probably didn't know the whereabouts of his hideout in Milan, which they took a month to find after Segrate. But they were surely familiar with the company he kept in Milan, Genoa, Turin, Trento, the Veneto. Almost literally at one fell swoop, therefore, they were able to round up an assortment of suspects that would warm the heart of any governing class in the position of the Italian governing class on the eve of an election like this last one.

For all the bewildering testimony from often shady sources, there was a wealth of incriminating evidence to show that Feltrinelli was deeply involved in a conspiracy going so far left as to come out the other side; that rightist and leftist terrorists were in collusion with his own and other

bands; that their plans were far advanced, with the prelude to uprising apparently timed for the last weeks preceding the May 7 elections. The underground bunker with its People's Prison had been set up only four days before Feltrinelli died and was evidently about to receive its first inmate, while dozens of bombing and arson attacks appeared to have been scheduled for April and May. Not if they had planned it themselves—and if they did, as some leftists still charge, it was incomparably better planning than any other they'd been guilty of in a quarter of a century of rule—could the democratic parties have offered voters a more salutary glimpse of the "opposite extremes" toward which they were drifting.

The results were noted by the influential *La Stampa* of Turin even before election day. "Two months ago," said *La Stampa*,

the turbid and unpunished violence of red and black *gruppuscules* . . . seemed a grave threat for our institutions and civil peace. A brief, impartial, and legitimate action by the judiciary was enough to demonstrate the isolation and weakness of these forces. . . . We are far from knowing the whole truth about these paramilitary bands. But we now have the proof that neither our *tupamaros* nor neo-Nazis are enough to destroy the Republic, nor need we violate our Constitution to throw them into dismay and confusion.

As *La Stampa* rightly concluded, the electorate by then had lost all sense of panic, the country was calm and orderly, and the elections went off without a hitch. The results were a triumph for the Christian Democrats, who won back nearly all of their more conservative voters "on loan" to the neo-Fascist MSI, pending some show of moral fiber on the government's part. The MSI came nowhere near doubling its vote as had been feared, winding up with only 8.7 percent of the national total. The Communists made no noticeable gains for the first time in any general election since 1948; and the *gruppuscules* to their left fizzled out like damp firecrackers. If this didn't necessarily assure a turn for the better in Italian politics, it did avert a turn for the worse. In the end, then—how he would have hated the epitaph—Feltrinelli died in the service of his country.

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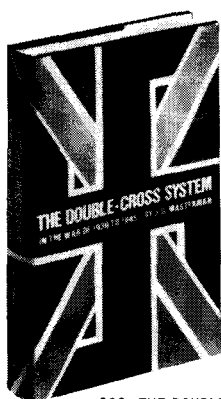


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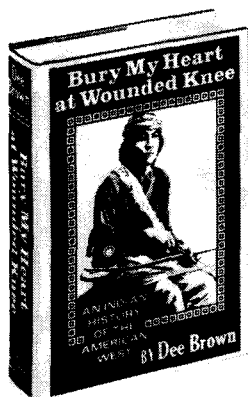
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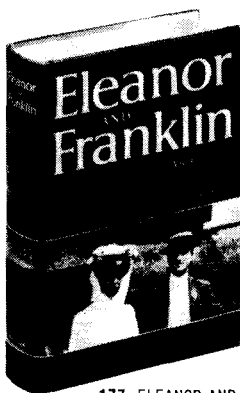
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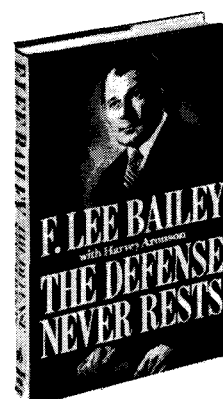
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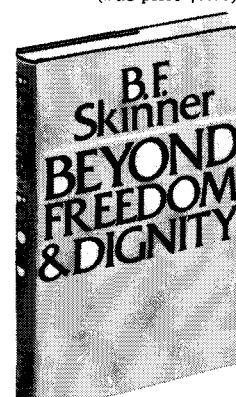
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Innocent Bystander



"Never Such Innocence":
July, 1914

by L. E. Sissman

It's hard to remember that less than a lifetime ago—within the lifetimes, in fact, of our fathers and grandfathers, some of whom still live—the world was such a different place.

In England, at the height of empire in the height of summer, 1914, people moved in their appointed, time-honored places as they and their ancestors had for generations: the "horseman" in East Suffolk, plowing his niggardly, unthankful farmer's field with a hard-learned care for the accuracy of a furrow that was art; the craftsmen sewing more stitches per inch into a pony harness than ever were strictly necessary; the railway servants, signalers and footplatemen alike, putting their spotless and beautifully painted expresses and goods trains into their destinations on the tick of the appointed time; small merchants taking infinite pride in the quality of their beer or lamb or nails or cabbages and in the spanking turnout of their shops; city clerks looking ahead to meticulous service and a painfully slow rise to a chief clerkship; Fabian ladies and gentlemen debating the course of the world with all the time in the world, and with infinite kindness and courtesy; vicars and dons and doctors making their self-assured way as unquestioned mentors to men; and aristocrats conserving or squandering capital and tradition, according to their wont.

In a flash—the distant flash of Prince's gun—all that was altered forever, and the world was plunged into the modern age of disillusion, suspicion, assassination, and war. The serenity of that final summer of peace has per-

haps been exaggerated in retrospect, as we tend to exaggerate the tranquility of a remembered happy childhood; with the big battalions forming up on both sides of the Channel, with new navies of dreadnoughts standing, steam up, in the roads at Kiel and Scapa Flow, it cannot have been quite as still and sunny and murmurless—except for the summer wind in the wheat and the copses—as that.

But by contrast with what almost immediately followed, it must always have been a season symbolized—as George Steiner has recently reminded us—by Christopher Tietjens' magic dogcart ride with Valentine Wannop through a nightlong mist on the Kentish downs in Ford Madox Ford's *Some Do Not* . . .

All this is brought to mind, nearly sixty years after the fact, by some books I've recently read or reread. As one might suspect, that sudden change from boundless peace to endless war, from innocence—Philip Larkin ends his celebrated poem "MCMXIV": "Never such innocence again"—to complicity in sin, has been well memorialized by English writers.

Editor Kenneth Giniger, in association with Stackpole Books, has recently reissued a whole series of narratives of the First World War. Two of the most striking—both from the English point of view—are Siegfried Sassoon's *The Memoirs of George Sherston* and Cecil Lewis' *Sagittarius Rising*. They couldn't be more different: Sassoon takes his hero, or antihero, a thinly disguised version of Siegfried Sassoon, from a happy prewar career as a fox hunter to the pity and misery of the Somme, where he becomes a prototypical war protester and is returned, not unkindly, to a shell-shock hospital in Scotland; Lewis takes himself, for his book is avowedly autobiographical, from public-schoolboy keenness to early maturity as a flight commander in the Royal Flying Corps. Sassoon, like Robert Graves, his fellow Royal Welch Fusilier, in *Good-bye to All That*, achieves a bitter indictment of the hidebound masters of the war—but his weapon is innocence: his own and that of the boys around him, both officers and other ranks, who die for nothing. His *saeva indignatio* in the cause of decency and human sweetness is balanced by Lewis' dem-

onstration of that peculiarly English sweetness in action. A dead-keen pilot, intoxicated with flight and separated from the horrors of the trenches by a mile of sky, Lewis developed a saving belief in his own invulnerability and lived through the war, increasingly showing that innocent steadfastness that must have been such a dominant trait of Edwardian England. His writing is less accomplished than Sassoon's—it tends to purple in the flying passages—but it is charged with such exhilaration and such moving youngness as to make *Sagittarius Rising* an invaluable book.

Add to these two books two more, and you will have a rounded picture of what we have lost in two generations, and of the magnitude, both psychic and numerical, of losses in the First World War. Martin Middlebrook's recent history, *First Day on the Somme*, tells, for the most part quite unsentimentally, what happened on July 1, 1916. Two years after the final summer of peace, the regrouped British Army, pushed hard by the French to take the pressure off Verdun, mounted a battle that epitomizes all the failures of leadership on both sides of the Western Front. Though British casualties had been heavy in such earlier fights as Loos, stringent recruiting efforts had raised a New Army of men who shared the patriotic spirit of the earlier recruits of August, 1914. These touchingly named battalions—the Salford Pals, the Glasgow Tramways, the Newcastle Commercial, the Glasgow Boys' Brigade, the Hull Tradesmen, the Hull Sportsmen—stood beside the Regulars and Territorials in seventeen divisions assigned to break the German line on a front of some twenty miles.

A long but ineffective artillery barrage preceded the battle; when the British troops went over the top, not at dawn but at 7:30 on the morning of July 1, they were immediately decimated—and more than decimated—by large numbers of surviving German machine-gun posts. British (and German) bravery was beyond praise; even the rawest New Army formations proceeded, at a walking pace (some idiot had decided that the supposedly annihilating bombardment precluded the necessity to run), toward their objectives, sometimes losing their entire force

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BYSTANDER

before reaching them. Obedience to orders was, in the main, undeviating. Unfortunately, the orders were suitable only for suicide units. At the end of the first day of the Somme, the British had taken almost sixty thousand casualties, more than in any battle before or since. And the Somme went on. It ended on November 14. Total casualties on the British side numbered over 400,000; the gain in ground was six inutile miles, four short of one of the first day's objectives.

Years later, one of the survivors, his bitterness undiminished, told Martin Middlebrook, "I cursed, and still do, the generals who caused us to suffer such torture, living in filth, eating filth, and then, death or injury just to boost their ego."

This brings us to the last book, the *Selected Poems* of Siegfried Sassoon. (Shamefully, Sassoon's verse is now out of print in this country.) I have enormous respect for the war poems of Wilfred Owen, who died, heart-breakingly, while leading his company of Manchesters across the Sambre Canal on—how awful—November 4, 1918, seven days before the armistice, but I find him, on balance, a little more self-conscious, a little less heartfelt, than Sassoon. In the *Selected Poems*, Sassoon is not always technically impeccable or as toughly unsentimental as we might wish a modern poet to be. Nonetheless, there are a dozen or so poems which, though flawed, must take their place among the great war poems of the ages.

"The Redeemer," which—again that trumpet note of innocence—likens a poor private shouldering a load of planks in the trenches to Christ, walks a tightrope of bathos but at last, barely and triumphantly, comes right and whole. "Blighters," which contrasts a patriotic wartime musical—"We're sure the Kaiser loves our dear old Tanks"—with the conditions of death on the Somme, has the real subversive bite of Louis MacNeice's "Bagpipe Music." "The Rear-Guard" tells, with infinite repulsion, the story of an officer who discovers that an apparently sleeping man in a deserted dugout is actually long dead and retreats upward to the trench, "Unloading hell behind him step by step."

"Fight to a Finish" is the most hostile of all Sassoon's seditious antiwar poems: it begins with a victory parade and ends with the returning troops, still armed, turning their bayonets first on the "Yellow-Pressmen" who sold the war to the English people and then on "those Junkers" in Parliament.

Finally, one poem, "The One-Legged Man," deserves to be quoted because it delineates the loss of innocence, the rise of selfishness, even the rightness of selfishness for those who had made the whole journey from illimitable peace to hideous war and back to a partial and uneasy peace again: "Propped on a stick he viewed the August weald; . . . / How right it seemed that he should reach the span/ Of comfortable years allowed to man! / Splendid to eat and sleep and choose a wife, / Safe with his wound, a citizen of life. / He hobbled blithely through the garden gate, / And thought, 'Thank God they had to amputate!'"

Beyond the poetry and the pity, there is a lesson for us in this disillusion of a generation of young men.

During the First World War, a kind of emotional Gresham's Law was at work: the Edwardian currency of great expectations—innocence, decency, justice, equality—was driven out by the false money of cruelty, greed, and injustice in the conduct of the war. Nor could the good currency be restored: once those young men had seen the miseries and stupidities of a war far more degrading than Goya's at firsthand, they could never again expect a better world than the one they got: unemployment, the Crash, the dole, the rise of Hitler, the decline of England, even in victory. In fact, it might even be said that the brutal excesses of the First World War were the enabling act—in the subconscious minds of men—for all the Katyns and Belsens that were to follow.

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THE MAIL

THE NEW JOURNALISM

SIR: Michael Arlen is guilty of every excess he charges to the New Journalists ("Notes on the New Journalism," May *Atlantic*). He has, for example, charged them with being cavalier about facts. But Arlen has invented an imaginary fire in an imaginary hotel as misreported by an imaginary journalist (new). It seems as meaningless to speculate on the reporting of a hypothetical fire as it is to conjecture that if Mr. Arlen had been the son of an Irish immigrant instead of an Armenian novelist he might have ended up as a Boston alderman and not as a literary arsonist putting the torch to a mythical hotel. Or, in other words, if Wednesday did not follow Tuesday, Thursday might be the fourth day of the week. Some example, some definition.

Mr. Arlen has further compounded his spurious hypothesis by a rather casual slander. His *imaginary* journalist *allegedly* says about the *hypothetical* fire, "But what does it matter" that he got the name of the *mythical* hotel wrong. Adrift in Mr. Arlen's sea of allegations, myths, and hypotheses, this poor, poor fellow should be excused for not remembering his name, country of origin, or day of the week, let alone the name of a hypothetical hotel. What Mr. Arlen seems to be implying (though his hypotheses are so labyrinthine that it is difficult to tell with certainty) is that his mythical journalist has set out to distort fact for effect. This is a rather too serious charge to remain unsubstantiated. I count myself a fastidious journalist, and I know Mr. Arlen is, but I also know that I have been guilty of the occasional unwitting error of fact, I assume Mr. Arlen has, and even Mr.

Arlen's careful journalist, A. J. Liebling, was.

Many years ago, in a broadside against Liebling, John O'Hara accused him of deliberately misquoting Ernest Hemingway, of taking something O'Hara himself had written out of context in order to hold him up for ridicule, and of describing a "stroll he took on a main thoroughfare of a Western city. He told of looking at a certain building while on his walk, and the only trouble *there* was that you can't see that building from that street." Mr. O'Hara was careful about such matters, and he supposed that Liebling would "call himself a creative journalist." It turns out that what wrenched O'Hara's nose so severely out of joint was Liebling's contention, long before Tom Wolfe ever appeared on the scene, that fiction writers should abandon creative writing for journalism.

What this all seems to boil down to is a matter of semantics and taste. There are journalists Mr. Arlen admires and those he does not, pieces he likes and those he does not, and what he does not like he calls New Journalism. It is an abominable phrase, and the only thing more numbingly boring than defending it is attacking it. I am an admirer of Michael Arlen's work, but if some reporters are sometimes less journalists than impresarios, so too is Michael Arlen as he "presents . . . the case against the New Journalism." Case dismissed.

JOHN GREGORY DUNNE
Malibu, Calif.

SIR: Michael Arlen missed the point of Tom Wolfe's articles on the New Journalism in *New York* magazine.

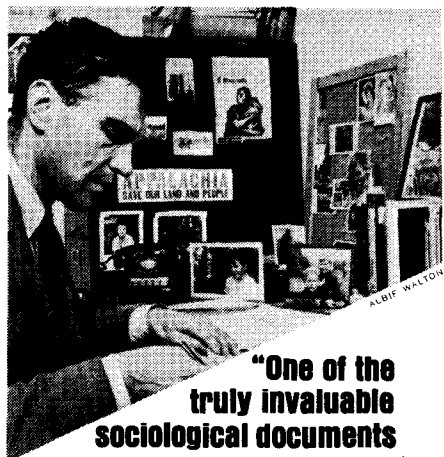
Wolfe begins the meat of his article by differentiating between the two

basic areas of journalism—the scoop and the feature. It is the feature, not the scoop, that Wolfe and the New Journalism are concerned with. Arlen fails to recognize this distinction, and his article, on the whole, is a gross misunderstanding of Wolfe's interpretation of the New Journalism. Arlen indicts Wolfe and the other new journalists for "a virtually antiofficial, impressionist, nonfactual, totally personal account of a happening." These criticisms simply do not stand up.

Throughout history, journalists have manipulated the reactions of the reader. If, for example, a journalist favors one candidate over another, one political or social theory over another, he has only to formulate his article accordingly, choosing quotes or events which best facilitate his point. Is this not also a "highly personal account"—the only difference being that it is perhaps a more subtle and deceptive means to an end than, say, "the nonfiction short story" of Wolfe's New Journalism, "a short story, complete with symbolism, in fact, and yet true-life . . . about something that happened today" (*New York* magazine)?

But the most insulting accusation Arlen made was that the New Journalism is nonfactual. Wolfe never suggests any lack of truth or any sacrifice of reality. Instead, he insists, and rightly so, that the New Journalism adds to the depth of reality and truth, that literary devices such as symbolism, dialogue, experimentation in narration, imagination in development, etc. complement the facts by adding new dimensions of reality, providing the reader with an entry into the situation being recounted.

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A

Michael Arlen replies:

I think Mr. Dunne missed the point of my piece. The reason I used the fire metaphor, as I think would be plain from reading it, was not as some device for pouncing on New Journalists, but as a way of showing the evolving relationship between our society and its journalism over the past fifty years, which is a dull way of putting an interesting process and is one of the reasons I used the damn metaphor. As to Mr. Dunne's taking a casual and inevitable remark of Liebling's, and by calling it a "contention," implying that Liebling conducted a sort of secret campaign to take reporters out of reporting and put them into novel writing—that is nonsense. So is his notion that my interest in journalism is so trivial that anything I don't like I label New Journalism and drop rocks on it. I think that if Mr. Dunne is so numbingly bored by the subject, he shouldn't bother writing two-page letters about it. And as for that "case-dismissed" business: let Reader Dunne dismiss his own cases.

Mr. Stout announces that "throughout history, journalists have manipulated the reactions of the reader." I suspect there is a distinction worth making between manipulating the reader to get him to read you, and manipulating the reader to get him to vote for your candidate, and I think that if Mr. Stout had read the work of good journalists—granted there are not many of them—he would have found few of them doing the latter. He also declares: "Wolfe never suggests any lack of truth or any sacrifice of reality." If Mr. Stout wishes to take Mr. Wolfe's pronouncements about his own work at face value, that's fine with me, but I don't feel compelled to join in. I think I'll continue trying to make up my own mind.

MIDDLE-AMERICA U.

SIR: Herb Gold, in "A Season at Middle-America U." (May *Atlantic*), escalated the cost of the "Convocation Center" by one and one half million dollars, doubled its annual operating costs, doubled the size of our airplane fleet (all contributed to Ohio University by corporations), identified the wrong building as "Allden's Pride," and mislabeled my



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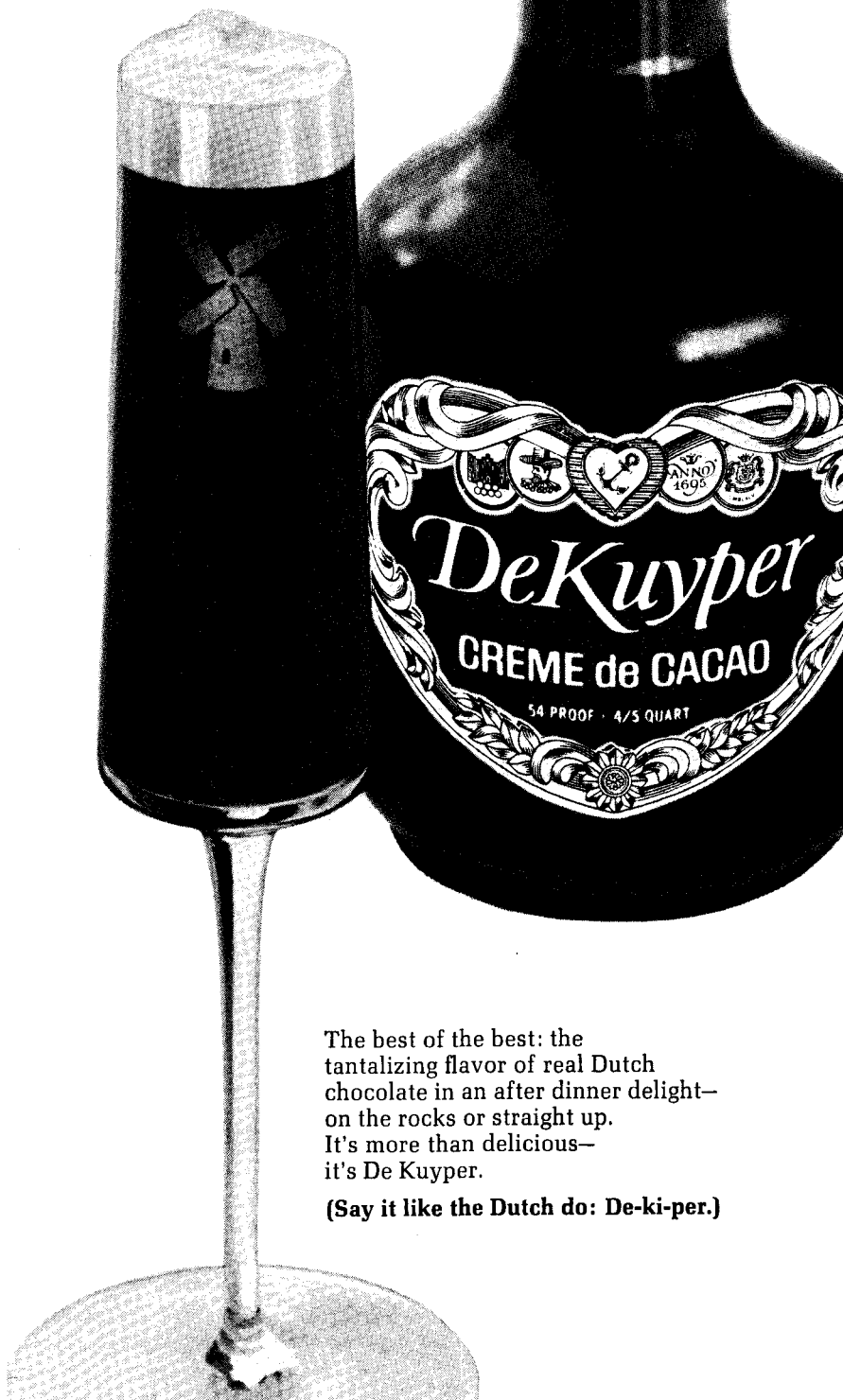
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(Say it like the Dutch do: De-ki-per.)

present responsibilities. (All in one small footnote, no less!)

Despite those and other flights into hyperbole, I was amused—and in some ways, intrigued—by the article. When not leering at the girls seated on the grass in front of Galbreath Chapel, he no doubt contributed much to an already stimulating group.

VERNON R. ALDEN
Boston, Mass.

Herbert Gold replies:

I appreciate Vernon R. Alden's good humor, although he disagrees with my count of certain costs, airplanes, and responsibilities. Those were the figures I was given by reliable sources on campus, but I'm not in a position to dispute Mr. Alden's figures.

As to the Convocation Center, either I was distracted by all my leering at beautiful girls or he is too modest. It was always called "Alden's Pride" to me. But I'm willing to grant that the chairman of the board of The Boston Company may remember another building as "Alden's Pride," perhaps the fine new library named after him.

SIR: I enjoyed Herbert Gold's sneer at Ohio U. I thought it was a lovely way to repay the kindness of this great university.

LIONEL CROCKER
Granville, Ohio

RCA DISASTER

SIR: It is unfortunate that Katharine Davis Fishman's otherwise fine article on the demise of RCA Computer Systems ("Programmed for Disaster," May *Atlantic*) should have ended by questioning the viability of IBM's other competitors as a class.

If in fact there is a common thread running through the spectacular failure of companies such as GE, RCA, and Westinghouse to survive in the computer market, it is surely that in each case the computer operation represented a small part of the overall company revenue. With the recently announced joint venture between NCR and Control Data Corporation, the only member of the Seven Dwarfs not inextricably committed to the computer market is Xerox Data Systems.

Looked at from this viewpoint, the business community should have no

Kids, sugar and

Do you have that little impulse to say "no no" when you see your little one enjoying something with a lot of sugar?

Lots of mothers have this prejudice. But, in fact, kids can often do kids quite a bit of good.

For one thing, *you* may not need calories, but kids certainly do. They run around so strenuously that they sometimes run their supply of body fuel just plain out.

And at the same time that they're running around, they

are also growing. And growing is a very energy-consuming process. It's no wonder that kids need a lot of energy. And that's why they need a lot of sugar. Sugar is a very important carbohydrate. It's the main source of energy for the body. And it's also a very important part of the diet. It's the main source of energy for the body. And it's also a very important part of the diet. It's the main source of energy for the body. And it's also a very important part of the diet.

It's not just the sugar that's important. It's the whole thing. The whole thing is important. It's not just the sugar that's important. It's the whole thing. The whole thing is important. It's not just the sugar that's important. It's the whole thing. The whole thing is important.

Sugar is a very important carbohydrate. It's the main source of energy for the body. And it's also a very important part of the diet. It's the main source of energy for the body. And it's also a very important part of the diet. It's the main source of energy for the body. And it's also a very important part of the diet.

Sugar. It isn't just good flavor, it's good food.

How to tell if your child is overeating. Just going and growing. Kids burn up a lot more body fuel than adults. If you're worried about overeating, take a look at your child. If he's not fat, he's not overeating.

For more facts about good nutrition, and sugar's role in it, write:

Sugar Information, General P.O. Box 94,
New York, New York 10001.

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difficulty in recognizing that the Seven Dwarfs are here to stay.

A. A. ALLISON
Mountain View, Calif.

SIR: As a resident of Marlboro, I was most interested in your recent article about RCA's "disaster" in our city.

It was stuffy going—reading about all the high-echelon deals—but when I finished, utter amazement set in at the total disregard for the hundreds of "little" people who were dumped—many never to regain the income levels they enjoyed before and during RCA's rainbow-waving.

There wasn't a moment lost in considering the loss to the city—our City Fathers can't commit themselves to finance a badly needed \$14 million high school. Yet Mr. Sarnoff sits back and takes a tax write-off for hundreds of times that amount.

I doubt if those people overlooking Rockefeller Center ever waste time on anyone in the under-\$20,000 bracket . . . although they magnanimously conducted a job-seeking seminar for those wishing it.

There are a lot of us here, not connected with RCA, who will never buy another of their products, and whatever other failures they endure are richly deserved, but unfortunately, Mr. Sarnoff's "other love," NBC, will keep him in clean underwear indefinitely, while a good many of his former employees will be "making do" for a long time to come.

MRS. PATRICK J. GOWASKI
Marlboro, Mass.

Katharine Davis Fishman replies:

I hope Mrs. Gowaski doesn't feel that the "disregard for the little people" is mine. Indeed, concern for those people was one thing that prompted me to write the article, and I hoped that the reader would react, as Mrs. Gowaski did, with compassion for the lives touched by the RCA disaster.

To Mr. Allison I would simply say that I was not questioning the viability of the other Dwarfs, I was just reporting that other people are questioning it.

WESTWARD HO

SIR: Are you aware that Richard T. Stout, in his article "The Democrats" (March issue), adroitly plagiarized two paragraphs from Nathanael

West's 1939 article "A Hollywood Premiere"? Perhaps the adaptation itself was intended as part of the irony.

DAVE LLEWELLYN
*Assistant Professor of English
Bryan College
Dayton, Tenn.*

Richard Stout replies:

The adaptation was intended as part of the irony. I did not use West's article. I used his novel *The Day of the Locust*. The theme of my article was that 1972 Democratic politics was a kind of "year of the locust." Setting the mood for my article led me instinctively to West's wonderful premiere scene, and I adapted. Adroit plagiarization if you prefer. But I certainly didn't intend to pull a Clifford Irving, or to pull the locust over anyone's eyes.

ADVICE AND CONSENT

SIR: I hope I am not the first to bring to the attention of your reviewer Donald Junkins ("After This Life We Will Listen," March) Julia Altrocchi's robust and beautiful epic poem *Snow Covered Wagons* (Macmillan, 1936). Long out of print, her narrative poem on the Donner party has set a standard of excellence against which the quality of similar poems may be measured.

JEANNETTE MAINO
Modesto, Calif.

SIR: In answer to Harvey Shapiro ("A Day," May *Atlantic*)—

A WOMAN'S DAY

Today began with hope,
Like a clean white sheet of paper
That I had meant to fill, all by myself,
With words of my choosing.
But you have scribbled over it
The facts of my life—
In anger, I wadded it up
And threw it into the wastebasket.
Now I sit waiting . . .
For a tomorrow that never comes;
For you have written
The days of my life.

LYNNE MCFALL SCHUESSLER
Parker, Ariz.

The Atlantic welcomes communications from readers, but can rarely accommodate letters in excess of 500 words. Light editing, for style and economy, is the rule rather than the exception, and we assume that any letter, unless stipulated, is free for publication in our letters column.

Contributors

DON COOK reports from Paris for the *Los Angeles Times*.

CLAIRE STERLING is a special correspondent for the *Washington Post*, based in Rome.

GEORGE W. BALL was Undersecretary of State from 1961 to 1966. In 1968 he returned to government as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. He is now a senior managing director of Lehman Brothers Incorporated.

ALIX KATES SHULMAN is the author of a recently published novel, *Memoirs of an Ex-Prom Queen*.

T.S. MATTHEWS' books of prose and poetry include *Name and Address* and *The Worst Unsaid*.

THEODORE ROSZAK is the author of *The Making of a Counter-Culture* and of the forthcoming *Where the Wasteland Ends*, from which his article is drawn.

MAXINE KUMIN's new book of verse, *Up Country*, will soon be published.

MILTON ESTEROW, author of *The Art Stealers*, is the editor of a new magazine, *The World of Art*.

SHARON CURTIN, a trained nurse, is at work on a book called *Nobody Ever Died of Old Age*.

"The Last Laugh" (page 79) begins a series by FERNANDO KRAHN, whose work has appeared previously in *The Atlantic*, and whose book *The Possible Worlds of Fernando Krahn* was recently published.

RALPH MALONEY's latest novel is *The Nixon Recession Capers*.

FRANK KERMODE, professor of English at London's University College, is a contributing editor of *The Atlantic*.

ALEXANDER ELIOT has written books about art, including *Sight and Insight*.

BETTY SUYKER is a *Time* researcher.

L.E. SISSMAN, EDWARD WEEKS, and PHOEBE ADAMS appear regularly in these pages.

The phone company wants more operators like Rick Wehmhoefer.

Rick Wehmhoefer of Denver, Colorado, is one of several hundred male telephone operators in the Bell System.

Currently, Rick is a directory assistance operator. "So far, my job has been pleasant and worthwhile," he says. "I enjoy assisting people."

We have men like Rick in a lot of different telephone jobs. Both men and women work as Bell System mechanics, truck drivers, installers and engineers.

We want the men and women of the telephone company to do what they want to do, and do best.

Today, when openings exist, local Bell Companies are offering applicants and present employees some jobs they may never have thought about before. We want to help all advance to the best of their abilities.

AT&T and your local Bell Company are equal opportunity employers.





Which one is the \$9,500 Mercedes? Which one is the \$3,900 Audi?

The interior on the top is the incomparable Mercedes-Benz 280SE.

The one on the bottom is the Audi 100LS.

You'll have to admit there's an uncanny resemblance.

Take the seats, for example. Both cars have seats that were designed by orthopedic surgeons. So they're not only exceedingly comfortable, but they also help prevent fatigue.

Both cars also have plush carpeting and a wooden dashboard. As well as a remarkable ventilation system that completely changes the air every 30 seconds at 45 mph.

The \$9,500[†] Mercedes 280SE isn't the only great car the Audi has something in common with.

The Audi has independent front suspension like the

Aston Martin. And front-wheel drive like the Cadillac Eldorado.

It's got the same type of steering system as the Ferrari 512 racing car, the same trunk space as the Lincoln Continental Mark IV and just about the same headroom and legroom as the Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow.

In today's economy, it's refreshing to find a car manufacturer that gives you a lot more car for your money.

(Or, should we say, a lot more cars.)

The \$3,900* Audi®
It's a lot of cars for the money.

*Suggested retail price East Coast P.O.E. \$3,855 (West Coast P.O.E. slightly higher). Other Audi models start at \$3,085. Leatherette upholstery optional, at extra cost.

[†]East Coast P.O.E. \$9,503 Mercedes-Benz 280SE. Local taxes and other dealer delivery charges, if any, additional. Porsche Audi: a division of Volkswagen.

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A LIGHT THAT FAILED

In the fall of 1964, fewer than 25,000 American troops were engaged in Vietnam, and they had been only lightly bloodied—not more than 300 dead and about 1000 wounded. Still, they represented a major commitment of American prestige and power, and that commitment was going badly. President Johnson's civilian and military advisers were preparing to urge on him a fateful step, the employment of heavy American bombing of the North and ultimately a deeper involvement in the war. As the discussion was beginning, Undersecretary of State George W. Ball sent a long memorandum to Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, and the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, McGeorge Bundy. The Ball memorandum of October 5, 1964, was an argument against escalation. "Once on the tiger's back," Ball warned, "we cannot be sure of picking the place to dismount."

The document reads today as if it had been written after the fact, so prescient was its prophecy of disasters for the Vietnamese, deaths by the thousands for Asians and Americans, and the frustration of American power. For all its prescience, the document failed to avert the Administration's painful, reluctant journey into a wider war.

The Ball memorandum has a curious history. After they read it, McNamara and Rusk and Bundy debated the arguments with Ball on two successive Saturday afternoons. Ball did not ask that the document go before the President at that time because LBJ was preoccupied with his campaign for election. But in January of 1965, Ball called the

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memorandum to the attention of Presidential Aide Bill Moyers, and Moyers promptly laid it before the President. Mr. Johnson was impressed and disturbed. He ordered Moyers to keep him supplied with all such documents in the future, and encouraged Ball to speak out all his doubts, and to offer alternatives to bombing North Vietnam and sending more American troops into action on the ground in South Vietnam.

For reasons that are not clear, the Ball document does not appear among the several versions of the Pentagon Papers, nor do several others from the stream of written dissents and recommendations for alternative policies he produced over nearly two years. These omissions leave an impression that there was virtually no dissent at the top from the government's "consensus" of 1964-1965, an impression amplified by President Johnson's limited references to Ball's role which, in his memoir, *The Vantage Point*, Mr. Johnson characterizes as a sort of *pro forma* "devil's advocacy." The full record shows, however, that the President devoted much attention to Ball's proposals, and in some instances, deferred some escalatory acts because of them. In the end, though, he decided that Ball's alternative proposals were a prescription for "losing" a war that America had to "win."

The paper shows that the policy-makers did in fact have before them, from the beginning of their deliberations, an argument that ran counter to their own assessments and cast a bright light on the inherent risks and the probable consequences of escalation. It was, however, a light that failed.

Even though the document has been classified top secret—arbitrarily, as is the case with so many matters of public interest—we choose to make it public because it is an uncommonly instructive piece of history, and also because of its pertinence to the present. It dramatizes a chilling truth about the way the decision-making process works these days in the American republic, a process that has become increasingly confined to an isolated President and a very few advisers and that thereby becomes immune to the intrusion of intelligent dissent and sound second thoughts.

Just as President Johnson argued in 1965 that though there seemed to be choices, in fact there was only the choice of widening the war, President Nixon told the nation on May 8, 1972, "We now have a clear hard choice among three courses of action: Immediate withdrawal of all American forces, continued attempts at negotiation, or decisive military action to end the war." Then he went on to say: "It's plain then that what appears to be a choice among three courses of action for the United States is really no choice at all."

As the document you are about to read makes clear, there were other choices then. Surely there were other choices in 1972.

—ROBERT MANNING

"TOP SECRET"

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

October 5, 1964

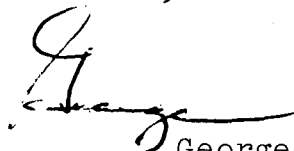
Dear Dean, Bob, and Mac:

I am enclosing my sceptical thoughts on the assumptions of our Viet-Nam policy. This amplifies our conversation a week ago as I promised to do.

The paper has the obvious limitations of a personal effort drafted mostly late at night and without benefit of staffing. I offer it as a focus for discussion and as an incitement to a broad study of the problem.

Only five copies of this document have been prepared. I am sending one each to the three of you and am retaining two in my safe. I think you will agree that it should not be discussed outside the four of us until we have had a chance to talk about it.

Yours ever,



George W. Ball

The Honorable
Dean Rusk,
Secretary of State.

TOP SECRET: THE PROPHECY THE PRESIDENT REJECTED

How valid are the assumptions underlying our Viet-Nam policies?

by George W. Ball

October 5, 1964

FOREWORD

I.

Purpose of Memorandum

Within the next few weeks we must face a major decision of national policy. The political situation in Saigon is progressively deteriorating. Even if that deterioration is checked, there seems little likelihood of establishing a government that can (a) provide a solid center around which the broad support of the Vietnamese people can coalesce or (b) conduct military operations with sufficient effectiveness to clean up the insurgency.

Under these circumstances the United States has four broad options:

1. Our *first* option is to continue the present course of action in an effort to strengthen the South Vietnamese effort, recognizing that at some point we shall probably either:

- a. Be forced to leave as a result of a neutralist coup or decision in Saigon; or
- b. Be forced to adopt one of the other options by the manifest hopelessness of the present course of action.

2. Our *second* option is to take over the war in South Viet-Nam* by the injection of substantial U.S. ground forces operating directly under a U.S. chain of military command.

3. Our *third* option is to mount an air offensive against the North in the hope of bringing pressure on Hanoi that would either:

- a. Persuade the Hanoi Government that the game is not worth the candle and that it should cease direction and support of the insurgency in the South; or
- b. Improve our bargaining position in relation to Hanoi and Peiping so as to make possible an acceptable political solution through negotiation.

4. Our *fourth* option is to adopt a course of action that would permit a political settlement without direct U.S. military involvement under conditions that would be designed hopefully to:

a. Check or at least delay the extension of Communist power into South Viet-Nam;

b. Provide the maximum protection for Thailand, Malaysia, and South Asia;

c. Minimize the political damage resulting to U.S. prestige in other Asian capitals, throughout the nonaligned world, and with our Western Allies.

The *first* option—to continue the present course of action—is not likely to lead to a clean-cut decision. To say this is not necessarily to condemn it. Yet if we are to seek a political solution without committing United States forces to direct military conflict by an air or ground offensive, it may be advantageous to set this process in train by an incisive decision under optimum circumstances rather than to let circumstances take their course. This question is discussed in Part Two of this memorandum.

The *second* option—to take over the war by the injection of substantial U.S. ground forces—offers the worst of both worlds. Our situation would, in the world's eyes, approach that of France in the 1950s. We would incur the opposition of elements in Viet-Nam otherwise friendly to us. Finally, we would find ourselves in *la guerre sale* with consequent heavy loss of American lives in the rice paddies and jungles.

The *third* option—to mount military pressure against the North primarily by an air offensive—is clearly preferable to the second. North Viet-Nam might well retaliate by ground action that would require the deployment of U.S. land forces. But there are obvious advantages in our initially choosing the offensive capability with which we have the unquestioned advantage. This memorandum raises a series of questions about the third and fourth options. It suggests lines of approach—tentative answers—to these questions. But it has not benefited by staff work which the complexity of the issues requires.

In raising these questions and offering some tentative answers, this memorandum creates a *prima facie* case for a possible alternative to intensifying our role in the Vietnamese war. Having met this burden of going forward, I suggest that the burden of proof is upon those who advocate the third option. It is they who seek increased U.S. involvement.

*For glossary and explanation of usage, see p. 49.

II. How to Approach the Problem

1. *Primacy of the Political Purpose*

The maintenance of a non-Communist South Viet-Nam is of considerable strategic value to the United States. Secretary McNamara has said of Southeast Asia:

Its location across east-west air and sea lanes flanks the Indian sub-continent on one side and Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines on the other, and dominates the gateway between the Pacific and Indian Oceans. In Communist hands, this area would pose a most serious threat to the security of the U.S. and to the family of Free World nations to which we belong. To defend Southeast Asia, we must meet the challenge in South Viet-Nam.

But, in spite of the strategic importance of the real estate involved, our primary motive in supporting the Government of South Viet-Nam is unquestionably political. It is to make clear to the whole Free World that we will assist any nation that asks us for our help in defending itself against Communist aggression.

For the purposes of this memorandum I have assumed that the political objective should be the principal frame of reference in assessing the cost of changing our present relations with South Viet-Nam either by directly involving the United States in an attack on the North or by the deliberate search for a political solution. That cost must be primarily measured by the political impact on other nations—the consequences for U.S. prestige and the credibility of our commitments elsewhere, the erosive effect on our alliances, and the impact on the will of other nations to continue to resist Communist aggression.

2. *South Viet-Nam Is Not Korea*

In approaching this problem, I want to emphasize one key point at the outset: The problem of South Viet-Nam is *sui generis*. South Viet-Nam is not Korea, and in making fundamental decisions it would be a mistake for us to rely too heavily on the Korean analogy. There are at least five principal differences between the present position of the United States in South Viet-Nam and our situation in South Korea in 1951:

a. We were in *South Korea* under a clear UN mandate.

Our presence in South Viet-Nam depends upon the continuing request of the GVN plus the SEATO protocol.

b. At their peak, UN forces in *South Korea* (other than ours and those of the ROK) included 53,000 infantrymen and 1000 other troops provided by fifty-three nations.

In Viet-Nam we are going it alone with no substantial help from any other country.

c. In 1950 the *Korean Government* under Syngman Rhee was stable. It had the general support of the

principal elements in the country. There was little factional fighting and jockeying for power.

In *South Viet-Nam* we face governmental chaos.

d. The *Korean War* started only two years after Korean independence. The Korean people were still excited by their newfound freedom; they were fresh for the war.

In contrast, the people of *Indochina* have been fighting for almost twenty years—first against the French, then for the last ten years against the NVN. All evidence points to the fact that they are tired of conflict.

e. Finally, the *Korean War* started with a massive land invasion by 100,000 troops. This was a classical type of invasion across an established border. It was so reported within twelve hours by the UN Commission on the spot. It gave us an unassailable political and legal base for counteraction.

In *South Viet-Nam* there has been no invasion—only a slow infiltration. Insurgency is by its nature ambiguous. The Viet Cong insurgency does have substantial indigenous support. Americans know that the insurgency is actively directed and supported by Hanoi, but the rest of the world is not so sure. The testimony of the ICC has been fuzzy on this point—and we have been unable to disclose our most solid evidence for fear of compromising intelligence sources.

As a result, many nations remain unpersuaded that Hanoi is the principal source of the revolt. And, as the weakness of the Saigon Government becomes more and more evident, an increasing number of governments will be inclined to believe that the Viet Cong insurgency is, in fact, an internal rebellion.

3. *The Present Situation*

The feeble condition of the Saigon Government is well understood. Perhaps the clearest appraisal of present conditions is in SNIE 53-2-64, unanimously approved by the United States Intelligence Board last Thursday:

Since our estimate of 8 September 1964 the situation in South Viet-Nam has continued to deteriorate. A coup by disgruntled South Viet-Nam military figures could occur at any time. In any case, we believe that the conditions favor a further decay of GVN will and effectiveness. The likely pattern of this decay will be increasing defeatism, paralysis of leadership, friction with Americans, exploration of possible lines of political accommodation with the other side, and a general petering out of the war effort. It is possible that the civilian government promised for the end of October could improve GVN esprit and effectiveness, but on the basis of present indications, this is unlikely.

4. *How to Formulate the Problem*

Confronted by this deterioration we find ourselves in a difficult dilemma:

Should we move toward escalation because of the weakness of the governmental base in Saigon in the hope that escalation will tend to restore strength to that base; or can we risk escalation without a secure

base and run the risk that our position may at any time be undermined?

So far we have focused our attention almost entirely on how we can (a) clean up the insurgency by actions in South Viet-Nam and (b) bring pressure on Hanoi to stop or materially reduce the insurgency. We have proceeded on the assumption that once having undertaken a program of military action in South Viet-Nam, we must pursue it until we achieve military success. We have assumed that without military success a negotiated solution could be achieved only at an unacceptable cost to the United States.

What we must now do, in view of the present precarious situation, is to undertake a rigorous balancing of accounts. We must examine the range of possible costs that might result from the widening of the war and the enlargement of the United States military commitment and balance those costs against the costs of a carefully devised course of action designed to lead to a political solution under the best conditions obtainable.

The purpose of this memorandum is to examine the assumptions that support each course of action. It is divided into two major parts:

Part One is an examination of the basic premises that underlie the case for achieving a solution through the application of additional military force.

Part Two is an examination of possible alternative courses of action for developing a political solution without the investment of further military force and at minimum cost to U.S. interests.

PART ONE

AN EXAMINATION OF THE PREMISES OF A POLICY OF MILITARY ACTION AGAINST NORTH VIET-NAM

A.

Conditions Necessary for Sustained Air Action Against the North

1. *Is our base in South Viet-Nam sufficiently secure to justify the undertaking of sustained air action against the North?*

The dangers of undertaking such air action without a secure base are at least two in number:

a. General Taylor has stated on more than one occasion that we should not become involved militarily with North Viet-Nam, and possibly with China, if our base in South Viet-Nam is insecure. (See Saigon's [cables numbered] 465 and 972.) If the political situation in Saigon should continue to crumble, air action against North Viet-Nam could at best bring a Pyrrhic victory. Even with diminished North Vietnamese support for the Viet Cong, a disorganized South Vietnamese Government would be unable to eliminate the insurgency.

b. The launching of an air offensive would involve a substantial additional United States commitment in South Viet-Nam. There is serious question whether such a commitment should be made so long as we are vulnerable to the risk that we may be asked to leave the country if a neutralist government emerges in Saigon.

2. *Would action against North Viet-Nam increase political cohesiveness and improve morale in South Viet-Nam so as to strengthen the governmental base?*

This contention deserves the verdict, known in the Scottish law, of "not proven."

Our objectives are not fully congruent with the aspirations of the South Vietnamese people. We are considering air action against the North as the means to a limited objective—the improvement of our bargaining position with the North Vietnamese. At the same time we are sending signals to the North Vietnamese that our limited purpose is to persuade them to stop harassing their neighbors, that we do not seek to bring down the Hanoi regime or to interfere with the independence of Hanoi.

When General Khanh temporarily raised the level of morale in July, he did so by promising the South Vietnamese people to lead them north in order to effect the reunification of Viet-Nam. "Certainly," he said on July 19, "our National Liberation Revolution will achieve success, and thus our beloved Vietnamese fatherland will become free, independent, and reunified." Only such statements, he felt, could help the "national war weariness." (See Saigon's 212 and 232.)

Reunification, however, is not a U.S. objective, nor can it be if we are to maintain a juridical posture acceptable to the rest of the world. Yet there is little evidence to suggest that the South Vietnamese would have their hearts lifted merely by watching the North Vietnamese suffer a sustained aerial bombardment. Most have families or at least friends in the North.

The following CIA report of the reaction in Saigon to our August bombings casts doubt on the easy assumption that air action against the North would necessarily improve South Vietnamese morale (Field Report, August 8):

1. On 6 August an American who speaks Vietnamese got the reactions of 20 or 25 Vietnamese of various walks of life in Saigon on the matter of the 5 August bombing of North Vietnamese installations by United States aircraft. It should be noted here that some of the Vietnamese were engaged in conversation among themselves and did not realize that the American nearby understood Vietnamese. Of these 20 to 25 individuals only one registered unequivocal support for the U.S. action. All other Vietnamese registered mild dissatisfaction to strong disapproval.

2. The one Vietnamese to declare support for the U.S. action was a sergeant in the airborne brigade who said he had been in the United States twice and considered himself more American than Vietnamese. On the other hand, none of the other Vietnamese of this small sample even indicated any particular dis-

The Prophecy the President Rejected

approval of the North Vietnamese attacks on American ships. About four of the individuals mentioned that they had been listening to Radio Hanoi and that Hanoi's version was different from the American. As a result they were not sure of the facts of the matter.

3. In almost all the cases the principal reason given for disapproval of the bombing action was that the Americans were now unilaterally killing Vietnamese while in the past the Americans were merely helping Vietnamese to kill Vietnamese. Another main reason for their disapproval was fear that the conflict would spread and more directly affect them.

The available evidence leads to the tentative cautionary conclusion that if air bombardment is not followed by the fact—or even the promise—of a military invasion of North Viet-Nam, there is no assurance that it would improve South Vietnamese morale over any significant period. We did bomb North Vietnamese targets on August 5. But since then there has been an abortive coup, a Montagnard revolt, further factional fighting, a weakening of Khanh's position, and general deterioration.

It may be argued, of course, that the observable effects of an isolated attack such as that of August 5 are not a fair indication of what might be the consequences of a sustained program of military pressure against the North. That is true. But to the extent that military action would invite significantly increased reprisals or would raise the specter of Chinese involvement, any momentary euphoria might well be replaced by demoralization. An air attack on Saigon, for example, would probably have anything but a cohesive effect on the population. On the contrary, it might incite further factionalism, contribute to war exhaustion, and lead to the destruction of the present weak governmental structure.

In sum, I find no assurance that morale can be improved by a U.S. air offensive against North Viet-Nam. Morale depends instead on effective political leadership and an improvement of the conditions of life. The increase in casualties that would result from escalation would be unlikely to appeal to a war-weary people.

B.

What Is the Most Favorable Result We Could Hope to Achieve by Military Action Against North Viet-Nam?

1. *Can we, by military pressure against North Viet-Nam, persuade the Hanoi Government to stop Viet Cong action in the South or at least reduce that action to the point where the Viet Cong insurgency becomes manageable?*

The Hanoi Government has been deeply committed to its present course of policy for many years. (See the documented analysis in "A Threat to the Peace," Department of State Publication 7308.) It is not likely to give up its objectives easily.

At the moment Hanoi believes that it is close to a victory in South Viet-Nam. So long as the situation in South Viet-Nam does not materially improve—so long as the Saigon Government continues in a state of ineffectiveness or disintegration—Hanoi will cling to the hope of ultimate victory.

So long as it believes victory is near, it will probably be willing to accept very substantial costs from United States air action. Its public posture, at home and abroad, and its private behavior, both diplomatic and military, support this hypothesis.

Not only will North Viet-Nam continue to have the will to support the insurgency but it will continue to have the ability.

Sigma II, conducted by the Joint War Games Agency, Cold War Division, Joint Chiefs of Staff, from September 8 to 11, 1964, revealed that exhausting the 1964 target list presently proposed for air strikes would not cripple Hanoi's capability for increasing its support of the Viet Cong, much less force suspension of present support levels on purely logistical grounds.

2. *Assuming that we might, through military pressure, persuade the Hanoi Government that it was paying more for the Viet Cong insurgency than it was gaining, would that Government in fact have the capability to stop or materially reduce the Viet Cong action to the point where it became manageable?*

In principle, the answer should probably be in the affirmative. But what is far more likely is that the Government in Hanoi would publicly disclaim further connection with the Viet Cong insurgency while in fact continuing to supply covert help. As stated in "Alternatives for Imposition of Measured Pressures against North Viet-Nam" (Policy Planning paper, March 1, 1964, Tab 2, page 4):

... Probably the most that could be expected in the best of circumstances, would be that the DRV would ultimately slacken and ostensibly cease its support of the VC, while pressing for a cease-fire in the South, ordering the VC to regroup and lie low, and covertly preparing to resume the insurrection as soon as the DRV thought it could get away with it. We can, of course, have no assurance that such "best of circumstances" would obtain, even if considerable damage had been done the DRV. . . .

3. *If a complete military victory is not possible, can we, by military pressure against North Viet-Nam, at least improve our bargaining position to the point where an acceptable negotiated solution might be achieved?*

This question cannot be answered categorically. So far, the only kind of bargain Hanoi has been interested in is one that would contemplate the withdrawal of the United States forces. The mere fact that we have levied destruction on North Viet-Nam would not lay the basis for a viable negotiated settlement unless at the same time three conditions had been met:

a. An effective government had been established in Saigon.

b. The Viet Cong insurgency had been reduced to a level where it could not eliminate a South Vietnamese Government deprived of U.S. support.

c. Effective international arrangements had been established to prevent further infiltration of supplies and material by the North Vietnamese Government.

4. *If, in fact, the United States, by direct employment of military power, did succeed in softening up the Hanoi Government, would this improve the climate for a negotiation that would be likely to include other Asian and neutral powers?*

The fundamental premise that it would be easier to deal with North Viet-Nam after an air offensive is, in my view, based on a wrong assessment of the political impact of such a course worldwide and its effect on our bargaining strength. These issues will be examined more fully in a later section.

C.

Possible Consequences of U.S.-Initiated Escalation

1. *Would the Hanoi Government yield to the pressure generated by our air offensive without first undertaking a major invasion of South Viet-Nam by North Vietnamese forces?*

In reacting to our air offensive, the North Vietnamese Government would be likely to follow the principle that each party would choose to fight the kind of war best adapted to its resources. If we were to escalate by employing air power—a type of offensive capability in which we have the unquestioned advantage—the North Vietnamese would be clearly tempted to retaliate by using ground forces, which they possess in overwhelming numbers. As stated in the October 3 draft SNIE (which the Intelligence Board is considering today), “. . . there would be a substantial danger that they would increase the pressure of the insurgency in South Viet-Nam, introducing additional forces to speed the collapse of the GVN and thus cut the base from under the US position before North Viet-Nam had suffered unacceptable damage.”

At the least we could expect Hanoi to make a larger infiltration effort. It is estimated that within two months an additional two divisions could be *covertly* introduced through Laos and across the DMZ.

Hanoi might also increase terror and sabotage in the South, including terror attacks on American personnel in Saigon and even the bombing of Saigon and other urban centers to induce demoralization.

Nor can we rule out the possibility that Hanoi would undertake an overt invasion. By directly bombing North Viet-Nam, we would have removed the political inhibition against overt use of force. It is estimated that in two months' time, it could put six divisions (roughly 60,000 men) across the zone and through the Panhandle. This could not, of course, be

done without expense. It would expose the North Vietnamese forces to counterblows from the air, especially against lines of communication and supply.

2. *Would the Peiping Government permit the North Vietnamese Government to stop the Viet Cong insurgency without its intervening directly on a limited or total basis?*

China has substantial interests that would be jeopardized by United States air strikes against North Viet-Nam.

a. Its *first* interest is to avoid the loss of face that it would suffer if it did not come to the assistance of a Communist neighbor against a United States attack. Peiping has, since our strike of August 5, repeatedly proclaimed at the most authoritative levels that “aggression against the DRV is aggression against China.” It has also conducted continuous propaganda campaigns to prepare its military and civilian populace for helping North Viet-Nam. On the other side of the coin, Hanoi's posture in the Sino-Soviet dispute has persistently supported Peiping's positions and attacked those adopted by Moscow, at least since June, 1963, and fear of subservience to Peiping does not seem to have materially affected Hanoi's course of action in confronting either Moscow or Washington.

b. A *second* Chinese interest is to safeguard its own security, which would be menaced by United States action directed at the establishment of Southeast Asia as a permanent base of threatening United States power. This seems clearly to have been the Chinese motivation in attacking when we approached the Yalu River.

c. A *third* interest is Chinese concern for the main rail line linking coastal Kwangtung with inner Yunnan Province. This line transits North Viet-Nam and is vital to the security of South China.

Already Communist China has involved itself in the air defense of North Viet-Nam by deploying Chinese pilots and aircraft to Phuc Yen and in the installation of joint Sino-Vietnamese air warning systems.

Of course, the question of possible Chinese involvement cannot be answered categorically one way or another. The October 3 draft SNIE concludes that in the face of sustained U.S. air attacks on North Viet-Nam, “a large-scale Chinese Communist ground or air intervention would be unlikely.” But we would be imprudent to undertake escalation without assuming that there was a *fair chance* that China would intervene. We made a contrary assumption in Korea in October of 1950 with highly unfortunate consequences. Let us recall the circumstances.

“In your opinion,” President Truman asked General MacArthur, “is there any chance that the Chinese might enter the war on the side of North Korea?”

MacArthur shook his head. “I'd say there's very little chance of that happening. They have several hundred thousand men north of the Yalu, but they haven't any air force. If they tried to cross the river

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our air force would slaughter them. At the most perhaps 60,000 troops would make it. Our infantry could easily contain them. I expect the actual fighting in North Korea to end by Thanksgiving. We should have our men home, or at least in Japan, by Christmas."

At the very moment that President Truman and General MacArthur were talking, there were already more than 100,000 Chinese Communist troops in North Korea, and another 200,000 were ready to cross the Yalu. By mid-November at least 300,000 Chinese would be poised to strike—and the ROK, American and other UN forces would not even be aware of their presence. Before the war was over, the Chinese Communist armies in Korea would reach a peak strength of more than a million men.

(Don Lawson: *The United States in the Korean War*, p. 79)

3. *Would it be possible for the United States to control the process of escalation so as to achieve the requisite improvement in its bargaining position without danger of triggering the kind of North Vietnamese or Chinese action envisaged by paragraphs 1 and 2?*

This question goes to the heart of the premise upon which the proposals of military pressure against North Viet-Nam are based—that we can take offensive action while controlling the risks and that we can halt the process of escalation whenever we feel we have accomplished our objective or the enemy is about to respond with unacceptable force.

I find this premise of doubtful validity. As we mount the scale of progressively more intensive air attacks on North Viet-Nam, either Hanoi will respond or it won't. Either Peiping will respond or it won't. (And I assume that what is wanted is not a preventive war with China.)

If neither responds, we shall be led to continue our attacks until there is some indication by Hanoi that it is ready to negotiate. But once Hanoi or Peiping does respond, our own counteraction will have to be measured by the character of that response.

It is in the nature of escalation that each move passes the option to the other side, while at the same time the party which seems to be losing will be tempted to keep raising the ante. To the extent that the response to a move can be controlled, that move is probably ineffective. If the move is effective, it may not be possible to control—or accurately anticipate—the response.

Once on the tiger's back we cannot be sure of picking the place to dismount.

D.

Need for U.S. Ground Forces

1. *Would it be possible to repel a heightened ground effort by North Vietnamese forces against South Viet-Nam without substantial U.S. land forces?*

The answer to this question is clearly "no."

In the case of an invasion it is obvious.

But even substantially increased infiltration from North Viet-Nam would require substantial American ground units to defend our bases from attacks by the North.

We cannot counter ground forces by air power alone, as we quickly learned in Korea.

And we should remember that in South Viet-Nam the nature of the terrain reduces the premium on modern firepower and logistic equipment even more than it did in Korea.

2. *Could substantial U.S. combat forces be committed to South Viet-Nam without substantially altering the relationship of the United States to the war?*

Up to now we have maintained in the eyes of the world that our forces were in South Viet-Nam solely to advise and train South Vietnamese forces and assist them with logistics. The injection of substantial United States combat forces would necessarily change our relationship to the management of the war. Such forces would be assuming conspicuous combat roles under a direct United States chain of command.

At the same time the presence of United States combat troops would necessarily mean a progressive taking-over of many of the functions now exercised by the South Vietnamese.

The French would take the lead in pointing out that we had now clearly put ourselves in the position of France in the early 1950s—with all the disastrous political connotations of such a posture. Asians would not miss the point.

The repercussions of this action would also be substantial on the home front. Americans would feel, for the first time, that they had again been committed by their leaders to an Asian war. The frustrations and anxieties that marked the latter phases of the Korean struggle would be recalled and revived—and multiplied in intensity.

3. *Could additional forces needed for security against the consequences of escalation in Southeast Asia be provided without large-scale U.S. mobilization? How fast could the United States move to carry out such mobilization?*

(The answer to this question has not yet been developed.)

E.

Pressure for Use of Atomic Weapons

1. *If the conflict stalemated on land—and particularly if the Chinese intervened—would the United States be likely to resort to the use of at least tactical nuclear weapons?*

If ground fighting should drag on for a sustained period, the U.S. forces would begin to take substantial casualties.

At this point, we should certainly expect mounting pressure for the use of at least tactical nuclear weapons. The American people would not again accept

the frustrations and anxieties that resulted from our abstention from nuclear combat in Korea.

The rationalization of a departure from the self-denying ordinance of Korea would be that we did not have battlefield nuclear weapons in 1950—yet we do have them today.

At the same time we must recognize that in the eyes of the world, and of Americans, the distinction between tactical and strategic nuclear weapons carries little conviction.

2. *Could nuclear weapons be used without substantial political costs to our world position?*

Our employment of the first tactical nuclear weapon would inevitably be met by a Communist accusation that we use nuclear weapons only against yellow men (or colored men). It is Communist dogma that this is the reason that we used atomic bombs against Japan but not against Germany in World War II. There would be a profound shock around the world not merely in Japan but also among the nonwhite nations on every continent.

In this connection we should recall the reactions in December, 1950, when President Truman even suggested the possibility of using atomic bombs in the Korean War—at a time when we still had the nuclear monopoly.

As stated by T. R. Fehrenbach, in *This Kind of War*:

Within three hours, there was resulting explosion.

The *Times* of 1 December remarked: The President's mention of an atom bomb caused consternation and alarm in Britain and brought from France official disapproval. Most U.N. delegates were agreed that it would be politically disastrous to use the bomb in Asia.

Nothing so awakened the French Assembly as mention of the bomb. To the fear of the bomb lately has been added a fear of General MacArthur, who is regarded as impulsive and reckless in his reported desire to bomb Manchuria and risk extending the war.

A headline read: Britons dismayed by Truman's talk—Attlee will fly to Washington to discuss crisis with President.

The *London Times* editorialized: [Truman] touched upon the most sensitive fears and doubts of this age. . . .

Winston Churchill, in Commons, warned the West against involvement in Asia at the expense of Europe. The House cheered Prime Minister Attlee's announced flight to Washington.

In Melbourne, Australia, where there were few friends of Red China, newspapers expressed the hope that diplomatic skill would avert a conflict with Communist China. The *Melbourne Herald* wrote: The Chinese can no longer be despised militarily. Their revolutionary leaders obviously command unity and loyalty which Chiang never attained.

Italian Communists and anti-Communists alike expressed deep fears of general war.

And papers all over the world stated that MacArthur should have halted the U.N. armies no farther

north than the middle of North Korea, leaving a buffer between them and Manchuria.

The Communists would certainly point out that we were the only nation that had ever employed nuclear weapons in anger. And the Soviet Union would emphasize its position of relative virtue in having a nuclear arsenal which it had never used.

At the same time, our action would liberate the Soviet Union from inhibitions that world sentiment has imposed on it. It would upset the fragile balance of terror on which much of the world has come to depend for the maintenance of peace. Whether or not the Soviet Union actually used nuclear weapons against other nations, the very fact that we had provided a justification for their use would create a new wave of fear.

The consequences of all this cannot be overstated. For the past four years we have been making slow but perceptible progress toward a new era of relations between the two centers of power in this mid-twentieth-century world. But the first use of the bomb by the United States would destroy all this. It would set us back to the tense and suspicious days before the Cuban missile crisis. Prospects for disarmament and other measures for lowering the general level of world anxiety would be destroyed.

Moreover, we would feel the effects deeply at home. The first firing of a nuclear weapon (whether tactical or strategic, it makes no difference) would revive a real but latent guilt sense in many Americans. It would create discouragement and a profound sense of disquiet. It would generate resentment against a Government that had gotten America in a position where we had again been forced to use nuclear power to our own world discredit.

F.

Possibility of Soviet Intervention

1. *What are the chances that the Soviet Union might intervene before or after the intervention of China and what form would Soviet intervention be likely to take?*

There is no reason to expect Soviet military intervention at an early stage of a U.S. air offensive against North Viet-Nam. But the Soviet Union would certainly be expected to lead a propaganda attack against U.S. imperialism and to support the political demands of Hanoi. This is an imperative of Soviet policy that derives from its competition with Red China for domination of the Communist parties around the world.

If Red China should decide at some stage in the struggle to intervene directly by the interjection of its own land forces, this would, of course, present a new situation. Peiping could then put great pressure on the Soviet Union to provide assistance—at least in matériel. This would probably have the effect of nar-

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rowing the schism between Moscow and Peiping, for we should have provided both sides with a common enemy.

Finally, our expenditure of even a single nuclear weapon would impose the ultimate test for the integrity of international Communism. While no one can be certain, the best judgment is that the Soviet Union could not sit by and let nuclear weapons be used against China.

G.

The Relative Political Costs of Escalation

1. *Would the clear evidence of our intention to carry out our commitments increase United States prestige around the world?*

The assumption which has governed our planning with respect to South Viet-Nam has been that the United States must successfully stop the extension of Communist power into South Viet-Nam if its promises are to have credence. It is argued that failing such an effort our Allies around the world would be inclined to doubt our promises and to feel that they could no longer safely rely upon American power against Communist aggressive ambitions.

We have by our own public statements contributed to such a reaction. (See, for example, Attorney General Kennedy's comment in Germany that if Americans did not stop Communism in South Viet-Nam, how could people believe that they would stop it in Berlin?)

Against these concerns one must balance the view of many of our Allies that we are engaged in a fruitless struggle in South Viet-Nam—a struggle we are bound to lose.

They fear that as we become too deeply involved in a war on the land mass of Asia, we will tend to lose interest in their problems. They believe that we would be foolish to risk bogging ourselves down in the Indochina jungle. They fear a general loss of confidence in American judgment that could result if we pursued a course which many regarded as neither prudent nor necessary.

What we might gain by establishing the steadfastness of our commitments we could lose by an erosion of confidence in our judgment.

Obviously the balance of these two considerations would vary widely from country to country depending on the specific national interest and national experience of each nation involved.

The balance would also be affected by the depth of the American involvement on the one hand and the manner in which we might propose to achieve a political solution without direct military involvement on the other.

One point, however, is clear. We cannot assume that an escalation of the war in South Viet-Nam involving a more profound American engagement would be universally applauded by our friends and

Allies or that it would necessarily operate to increase our prestige or the confidence placed in us.

2. *How would countries in Southeast Asia react to these courses of action?*

The Philippines and Thailand would have an initial preference for escalation over any immediate move for a political solution. They might be prepared at the outset of escalation to offer material help in the form of bases and perhaps technical personnel. But this initial reaction would last only so long as our actions showed unequivocal signs of success in halting North Vietnamese aggression in South Viet-Nam and produced no serious threat of Red China's involvement. Should Red China come to North Viet-Nam's defense, Thailand, at least, would be alarmed at the dangers of an overland thrust from the North.

It is possible that the move for a political solution might create a crisis of confidence on the part of Thailand. Yet with their usual pragmatism and realism, the Thais would be unlikely to blame the United States were Saigon simply to give up the fight. So much would depend upon the sequence of developments, the final settlement, and what we were prepared to offer as a guarantee of our willingness to assist Thailand against aggression, that I cannot now make a more precise prediction.

Suspicious or hostile neutrals—Burma, Cambodia, and Indonesia—would have mixed feelings about either course. But they would no doubt be happier with a political solution out of a simple desire to see the "mess" in South Viet-Nam disappear. A U.S. air offensive against North Viet-Nam would be publicly condemned in both Cambodia and Indonesia, but only Cambodia might be likely to give marginal help to the Communists.

3. *How would this affect our position in Japan and elsewhere in Asia?*

Japanese views have not yet crystallized on the importance to Japan's security of Southeast Asia, much less South Viet-Nam. Tokyo seems to have little faith, at present, that South Viet-Nam can long resist the Viet Cong. Under these circumstances, a carefully worked out political solution would presumably be preferred to escalation, especially were escalation to bring in Red China. This latter contingency would prove embarrassing for the government if any use were made of our bases or our forces in Japan.

Of all the Asian countries the Republic of China and the Republic of Korea would probably have the strongest preference for escalation and most determined opposition to a political solution. For Taiwan, the stakes would be nothing less than recovery of the mainland as opposed to an expansion of Red Chinese power. Seoul would interpret our willingness to remain committed in Asia in one direction or the other, depending upon how we handled these courses of action.

4. *What would be the effect on the United States's position in the other less-developed countries?*

The general attitude of the less-developed countries is not hard to predict. In my view a carefully worked out political arrangement would cost the United States little with most of the less-developed countries, particularly if it appeared that in joining in developing such an arrangement we were responding to the wish of the South Vietnamese people to bring a halt to the war. The loss of face to the United States under these circumstances should not be at all substantial.

On the other hand, the opinion of the less-developed countries would strongly oppose an air offensive against North Viet-Nam. The element of race would have a strong influence, as well as the disparity in strength and size between ourselves and the Vietnamese. We could not avoid a reaction in many of the less-developed countries that we had substituted ourselves for the French in the continuation of a colonial war.

Our loss of prestige in the nonaligned countries, or even in most of those less-developed countries allied with us in defense arrangements, would, of course, be enormously magnified if we were led to use even one nuclear weapon.

5. What would be the effect on the United States's position in Europe?

Most of our European allies would, I think, applaud a move on our part to cut our losses and bring about a political solution. Opinion in France is, of course, clear on this question. But opinion in other European countries would also be against any escalation of the war that might conceivably lead to the involvement of European combat forces on the Asian Mainland.

As has repeatedly been pointed out in this memorandum, the issues in Indochina are not clearly defined, as they were in Korea. Even during the Korean War our Allies grew unhappy with the extent of our involvement as the war dragged on—even those who had applauded our demonstration of steadfastness at the beginning.

I discussed this general problem of European reactions to Viet-Nam with [NATO] Secretary-General Brosio the other night. In Italy, he said, public opinion was not sympathetic with the American efforts in South Viet-Nam—even though our position was understood by some of the leaders at the top level of the Government. In Germany he had observed a willingness to accept America's present Southeast Asia policies "as a matter of correctness," but Germans would certainly feel deep concern if they ever thought we were becoming involved on the Asian land mass to the point where we might begin to reduce our defense efforts in Europe.

The British are, of course, a special case because of their own interests in Malaysia. I cannot, however, believe that any British Government—particularly a Labor Government—would be happy if our air offensive should continue for any length of time against a small Asian country.

In final essence, our influence in Europe depends not merely on the defense efforts we are making, but on European confidence in our judgment and restraint. If we were to take any action that might be regarded as demonstrating either a lack of judgment or a lack of restraint, we would greatly undermine our European position.

The French are already busily promoting rumors that the United States is so involved in Southeast Asia that it can no longer be depended upon to concern itself with Europe. Once we mounted an air offensive that might lead to substantial escalation, this rumor would begin to find a willing audience in several European countries.

PART TWO

THE PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES OF A POLITICAL SOLUTION

A.

The Thrust of the Analysis

The analysis contained in Part One suggests the following:

1. Unless the political base in Saigon can be made secure, the mounting of military pressure against the North would involve unacceptable risks.

2. To persuade the North Vietnamese Government to leave South Viet-Nam alone, military pressure against Hanoi would have to be substantial and sustained.

3. Even with substantial and sustained military pressure it is improbable that Hanoi would permanently abandon its aggressive tendencies against South Viet-Nam so long as the governmental structure in South Viet-Nam remained weak and incapable of rallying the full support of the South Vietnamese people.

4. The United States cannot substitute its own presence for an effective South Vietnamese Government and maintain a free South Viet-Nam over a sustained period of time.

5. We must be clear as to the profound consequences of a United States move to apply sustained and substantial military pressure against North Viet-Nam. The response to that move—or even the deployments required by prudence in anticipation of a response—would radically change the character of the war and the United States's relation to the war. The war would become a direct conflict between the United States and the Asian Communists (North Viet-Nam cum Red China).

6. Once the United States had actively committed itself to direct conflict with the North Vietnamese and Hanoi had responded, we could not be certain of controlling the scope and extent of escalation. We

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cannot ignore the danger—slight though some believe it to be—that we might set in train a series of events leading, at the end of the road, to the direct intervention of China and nuclear war.

7. Finally, it remains to be proved that in terms of U.S. prestige and our world position, we would risk less or gain more through enlarging the war than through searching for an immediate political solution that would avoid deeper U.S. involvement.

B.

What Political Solution?

The analysis in Part One logically raises the question as to what is meant by political solution. How could this be achieved at minimum cost and maximum security?

I can set down no more than a sketchy outline of the possibilities. For quite obvious reasons, we have so far not undertaken any intensive expert study of this question.

We have spent months of concentrated effort trying to devise ways and means to advance the present policy of winning the war in the South.

We have spent weeks trying to devise an effective strategy for applying increasing military pressure against the North.

But we have given almost no attention to the possible political means of finding a way out without further enlargement of the war.

If we are to make informed decisions on the range of critical issues that now confront us—decisions that would reflect the evidence and arguments on more than one side of the case—we should undertake a searching study of this question without further delay.

As a preliminary contribution to such a study I suggest consideration of the following issues—among others.

C.

Clearing the Air for a Negotiated Solution

1. *Is it realistic to think we can improve our negotiating position by an air offensive?*

Most of those who argue for applying sustained military pressure against the North disclaim the objective of total military victory. They contend instead that such military pressure is necessary in order to improve the bargaining position of the United States—or, in other words, in order to enable us to bargain from strength.

This contention presupposes that it will be possible to achieve a political solution that will satisfy the major requirements of American policy—but only after the war has been transformed from its present character of a conflict between North Viet-Nam (cum Red China) and South Viet-Nam (cum the United

States) into a clear demonstration of the superiority of U.S. to Asian power and determination.

I reject this thesis. In my view the transformation of the war in this manner would create enormous risks for the United States and impose costs incommensurate with the possible benefits. But at the same time I would challenge also the thesis that a negotiation arrived at after sustained military pressure would necessarily result in a more favorable political solution than a negotiation that was not preceded by such pressure—even assuming that we were able to avoid a major war in the process.

The position I am urging becomes clear, I think, when we examine the elements that would constitute a solution adequate to our political requirements.

D.

What Provisions Should We Seek to Have Included in a Negotiated Settlement?

Ideally a negotiated settlement of the problem of South Viet-Nam should include the following provisions:

(a) The effective commitment of North Viet-Nam to stop the insurgency in the South;

(b) The establishment of an independent government in Saigon capable of cleaning up the remaining elements of insurgency once Hanoi has ceased its direct support;

(c) Recognition that the Saigon Government remains free to call on the United States or any other friendly power for help if it should again need assistance; and

(d) Enforcible guarantees of the continued independence of the Saigon Government by other signatory powers.

E.

What Kind of Political Settlement Might We Reasonably Hope to Achieve by Negotiation Following Sustained Military Pressure on the North?

1. *How would we move from sustained air attack to the conference table?*

The draft SNIE 10-3-64 entitled “Probable Communist Reactions to Certain Possible U.S./GVN Courses of Action” indicates that the range of Communist reactions to a U.S. air offensive might include:

- a. Retaliatory military moves on the ground;
- b. A temporary suspension of Viet Cong action;
- c. A drive to increase the insurgency in South Viet-Nam by the introduction of additional forces “to speed the collapse of the GVN and thus cut the base from under the U.S. position before North Viet-Nam had suffered unacceptable damage”;

- d. An effort to mobilize international pressure against the United States and a suggestion of some willingness to accommodate U.S./GVN views in order to bring about a new conference.

The SNIE suggests that it is unlikely that Hanoi and Peiping would undertake large-scale Chinese Communist ground or air intervention in view of Communist China's desire to avoid a full-scale war with the United States. However, they do not—and in the nature of things cannot—rule out this possibility categorically. Nor can we prudently do so in designing a South Vietnamese policy in view of the magnitude of the costs if we are wrong.

As of the time this is written, there does not appear to be full unanimity in the Intelligence Community as to the emphasis to be placed on the alternative possibilities that Hanoi might react to sustained U.S. air attack by (a) temporarily slowing down or suspending Viet Cong action or (b) reinforcing and accelerating the South Vietnamese insurgency. If Hanoi were, in fact, to introduce additional forces into South Viet-Nam and achieve conspicuous Viet Cong successes, we should be faced with substantial pressure for the United States to move from air attacks against North Viet-Nam to a direct involvement of American forces against the insurgency.

Certainly the conclusions of the SNIE—tentative as they are—underline the fragility of the governmental structure in the South and suggest clearly the hazards of a quantum jump in United States military involvement through an air offensive, at a time when the legitimacy of our presence could be destroyed overnight by the emergence of a neutralist government in Saigon.

Certainly, if, following the institution of an air offensive, Hanoi were to begin serious agitation to summon an international conference to halt "U.S. aggression," we should have to respond quickly before the Saigon Government crumbled beneath us and world opinion coalesced against us.

2. How strong a position would America have in a conference that followed a sustained air offensive?

Any negotiation that followed an air offensive would probably take place in the framework of a large international conference. Hanoi and the Communist Bloc nations could be expected to seek such a conference, and we should be under great pressure from neutral countries to acquiesce.

We should not assume that our posture in such a conference would be very good. We would already have taken the fateful step of recasting our Southeast Asian role. No longer could we succeed in presenting ourselves as a great power engaged in helping a beleaguered small power at the small power's request. In the eyes of a great part of the world we would appear as the leading Free World power utilizing modern weapons of destruction to destroy the economic life of a defenseless small nation. Certainly this would be the thrust of Communist propaganda.

It would be reinforced by gloomy headshaking in Paris. We would be cast in an aggressive role as never before in the postwar world.

Let me reiterate once more that Indochina is not Korea. In bombing North Viet-Nam we would *not* be seeking to stop massive and overt aggression south of the Yalu River on behalf of the UN. We would appear instead to be a great power raining destruction on a small power because we accused that small power of instigating what much of the world would quite wrongly regard as an indigenous rebellion.

Under these circumstances our position at the conference table would be awkward—in spite of our best efforts to portray America's role in its true light. Certainly we would expect both the Communists and nonaligned powers to insist—as an indispensable prerequisite in any settlement—that the United States withdraw its military presence from Southeast Asia. We would expect also a cease-fire, which the United States would necessarily obey but which in the nature of the insurgency would be very hard to police.

It is hard to foretell how the conference would deal with the insurgency itself. Most of the member nations would instinctively seek some kind of reconciliation of the Vietnamese and Viet Cong elements through an enlargement of the governmental base. But, as will be pointed out, we should be able to achieve that result quite as easily—and in a better international climate—if we went to a conference that had not been preceded by an air offensive.

It may be contended that the scenario I have outlined is not one that the United States need follow. Instead of agreeing to a big conference, could we not undertake to pursue a negotiating track through direct or indirect approaches to Hanoi and try to bring about a political settlement that would not bog us down as happened in Geneva in 1962?

I seriously question the possibility that we could avoid a big conference. Once we had launched an air offensive we would find ourselves under great world pressure to stop the shooting and move to a conference table in the presence of other nations. The war, in effect, would have become everybody's business. We should have lost the option of quiet negotiation—and indeed a good deal of our ability to influence the choice of forum.

3. What can we reasonably hope to achieve by a negotiation not preceded by direct military action against the North?

- a. First of all we could expect the condition precedent to the beginning of negotiations to be an agreement for a cease-fire.

- b. As part of the settlement regular U.S. forces would almost certainly have to be withdrawn. This withdrawal, however, might be phased. It would commence only when the cease-fire was fully effective and provision might be made for the return of U.S. forces (at the request of the Saigon Government) if the cease-fire were violated.

- c. The base of the Saigon Government would

have to be broadened to include Viet Cong elements.

d. Depending upon the format of the negotiation the independence of South Viet-Nam might be guaranteed by other signatory powers with possible provision for a control commission or some other kind of international pressure to police the security provisions of the agreement.

F.

The Possibility of a Diplomatic Settlement Not Preceded by an Air Offensive

1. *What preliminary steps should we take to minimize the cost to American prestige of a negotiated solution not preceded by military action?*

We are presently in South Viet-Nam because the South Vietnamese people, speaking through their Government, have asked us to help them resist Communist aggression. We have repeatedly stated that we will continue in South Viet-Nam "so long as the Vietnamese people wish us to help." We have tried to make clear to the world that we are prepared to assist any nation that asks our aid in defending its freedom against Communist attack.

The qualifying words "so long as the Vietnamese people wish us to help" assume two things:

a. That there is *in fact* a widespread desire on the part of the Vietnamese people to avoid a Communist take-over and that they are prepared to continue to risk their lives in a sustained struggle to achieve this end; and

b. That South Viet-Nam has an effective Government that can speak for the South Vietnamese people and can conduct the struggle on their behalf.

At the moment, both of these points are in doubt. Intelligence information discloses substantial war-weariness among the South Vietnamese people. This is backed up by a rising curve of desertions and the Government's increasing difficulty in filling the rolls through enlistment.

The fact that there is no effective South Vietnamese Government that can adequately direct the affairs of the country in the present war crisis hardly needs argument. Almost every substantive cable from Saigon underlines this point.

As a first step in preparing the ground for a political solution at minimum cost, we should make clear to the world how the juridical and political basis for continued American effort relates to the existing state of facts in South Viet-Nam.

In specific terms, this would involve the following steps:

a. We should clearly and emphatically reiterate the basis for our involvement in South Viet-Nam, emphasizing the qualifying phrase "so long as the South Vietnamese wish us to help." We should put other governments on notice that we do not intend to remain in South Viet-Nam, once it develops

that the Vietnamese people, speaking through their Government, no longer desire our help. We should, so far as possible, seek to make a virtue out of this position, emphasizing that, unlike the Communists, we never seek to impose our will on another country.

b. We might, at the same time, serve notice on the South Vietnamese Council that we are determined to continue the struggle and have the capability to do so but that this is possible *only* if they achieve a unity of purpose in Saigon, clearly express that unity, and create a Government free from factionalism and capable of carrying on the affairs of the country.

c. If properly managed, this notice should signal to whatever responsible elements remain in Saigon that they must declare themselves. It might be expected to have one of three effects:

(1) Hopefully—but not probably—it might result in pulling together the responsible elements in the country and lead to the creation of a unified government.

(2) It might free the capitulationists and neutralist elements to organize a government on neutralist principles.

(3) In spite of the fact that we had emphasized United States determination equally with the condition precedent, there would probably be a strong tendency in Saigon to regard this as a warning of ultimate United States disengagement. The most likely overt reaction would be ambiguous. But we would almost certainly accelerate existing covert probing of the possibilities of a deal with Viet Cong elements. (See SNIE 53-2-64, par. 10.)

2. *Should we seek immediate negotiations or a period of maneuver?*

It would probably be better for us to encourage a period of ambiguity than to seek immediate negotiations. The main argument on the other side is that the Viet Cong now have no prominent leader to represent them. In time they might gain one. But this factor seems more than offset by the arguments for a period of maneuver. A U.S. effort to force an abrupt showdown would increase the chances that the South Vietnamese would blame us for whatever ensued. A period of delay would permit the various sectors of Vietnamese opinion to adjust to the possibility of a political solution. Such a period would also permit the personalities who might otherwise be the victims of retaliation to make their own personal arrangements. And, by allowing a period of wheeling and dealing, the United States itself might play a more effective role in influencing the selection of a transitional government and affect the shape of the negotiations.

3. *What other Governments might be helpfully enlisted in setting the stage for a negotiated solution?*

The Governments that should be considered include:

- a. The United Kingdom
- b. Canada
- c. The Philippines
- d. Poland and India (through the ICC)

I do not suggest that we approach the French Government. Certainly De Gaulle's policy will be to try to bring about United States disengagement at maximum, rather than minimum, cost to United States prestige. It is important that we design our plan of action in such a manner as to avoid having it appear as a French diplomatic victory.

I am not prepared at this point to suggest the manner in which the good offices of other governments might be used, since this will require a study of the problem and the definition of a more precise course of policy.

G. Framework for a Settlement

1. *What kinds of framework might be utilized for achieving a negotiated settlement?*

a. The *first* is a localized negotiation between a neutralist South Viet-Nam Government and the National Liberation Front. This would probably not lead to the reunification of Viet-Nam—at least not immediately—but merely to the creation of a government of national union. In reality, of course, the National Liberation Front would be speaking under the tutelage of the Hanoi Government, but the negotiations would have the appearance of a local reshuffling of the various elements involved in the international South Vietnamese struggle.

Localized in this way, the settlement would not contemplate any third-power guarantees—at least initially.

b. The *second* possibility is a negotiation between the Saigon Government and the Government in Hanoi. A settlement reached in this manner would be likely to lead to the reunification of Viet-Nam under a government largely dominated by Communists.

c. The *third* possibility is a large-scale approach to the "neutralization" of South Viet-Nam with third-power guarantees.

The effect of such a settlement would be to extend the Laos formula to South Viet-Nam. In view of present power relationships, the settlement would almost certainly mean the withdrawal of American forces.

d. The *fourth* possibility is a large-scale approach to the neutralization of all of Indochina (and even of Southeast Asia) under third-power guarantees.

This is essentially what General de Gaulle is proposing. He advocates a conference in which "many powers would participate." This means at least the fourteen powers that participated in developing the Geneva Accords. The outcome would presumably be a revision of the Geneva Accords so as to apply something akin to the Laos formula to the whole of Indochina.

2. *What type of framework would result in the best outcome for American interests?*

A strong argument can be made in favor of the first option—a local settlement. Such a settlement, worked out within South Viet-Nam, would mean the incorporation of National Liberation Front elements in the governmental base. But that government would also include elements drawn from the religious sects, the Army, and other factors of Vietnamese life. The result might well be an uneasy coalition in which the Communists would presumably be the most aggressive and dominant component. But the full effect of a Communist take-over would be diffused and postponed for a substantial period of time.

By making it possible for the South Vietnamese to work out a settlement among themselves—without the direct and overt interference of Hanoi—we would obscure and confuse the Communist victory by injecting elements that suggested the resolution of an internal revolt.

Such an approach would have the additional advantage that it would not directly involve Peiping. As a consequence the settlement would not appear as the overt extension of Chinese power further into Southeast Asia. If—as is often argued—the Viet Minh do not wish to have Red China playing too large a role in their affairs, this form of settlement might help them to resist Chinese domination. To that extent it could serve the purposes of the West.

We may be driven to this result and—if so—we should be prepared to minimize the breakage. But it is not a solution which we should seek as an object of policy.

Nor is a negotiation within the second framework. While the matter certainly deserves more intensive study than I have been able to give it, I can see definite disadvantages in a direct negotiation between Saigon and Hanoi in which no other powers would be present. There is a danger that such a negotiation would involve a satellite status for South Viet-Nam if it did not result in an actual reunification.

Certainly, a large-scale conference on the 1962 Geneva pattern would seem preferable to a direct Saigon-Hanoi negotiation. By providing for a continuing third-party involvement—plus some kind of national control mechanism—the great powers would continue to exercise some restraint against overt Communist moves in the country.

As General de Gaulle has suggested, a large conference would tend to dilute the nature of the direct confrontation between the Bloc and the Free World. It should result in a settlement that would provide at least some protection for non-Communist elements in the population.

General de Gaulle proposes that such a conference should not be limited to the problem of South Viet-Nam but should extend at least to all the territory of the old French Indochina. He has even indicated the possibility of extending it to all of Southeast Asia.

To accept the principle of a large conference does

The Prophecy the President Rejected

not necessarily mean acceptance of all De Gaulle's assumptions. The virtues General de Gaulle sees in a large conference are that it would last a long time—a year or even two years—and that during this period the Viet Cong would maintain a cease-fire. The maintenance of a cease-fire, however—particularly in the case of an insurgency such as that in South Viet-Nam where there are no well-defined battle lines—does not seem a very realistic possibility in view of our other experiences with the Communists. In the 1954 Geneva Conference the Viet Minh used military pressure throughout the conference to influence the political result—including the siege of Dien Bien Phu.

General de Gaulle also puts great emphasis on another assumption, that Ho Chi Minh and the North Vietnamese Government have inherited the ancient Indochinese determination to resist Chinese domination. This tendency, however, might be better served by a localized conference than by a conference in which China played a dominant role. Certainly it is hard to accept General de Gaulle's thesis that the Red Chinese Government is not expansionist, that it is preoccupied with domestic problems, and that for at least the next 10-15 years Peiping will be content to leave Southeast Asia alone—so long as it is not menaced by an American presence in that peninsula.

3. Does the UN offer a possible alternative framework for a political solution?

The main difficulty with a conference solution is that experience shows that *ad hoc* machinery, usually constituted on a Troika basis, is ineffective in policing the settlement and in enforcing the safeguards established for neutrality.

An alternative would appear to be UN involvement. With all its defects, UN intervention in the Middle East, the Congo, and even in Cyprus has given us advantages that would not have been present in a situation of direct national involvement.

Of course, there are a number of obvious objections. U Thant, for example, has said that the situation in Viet-Nam would be beyond the capacity of the organization. Moreover, the interests of Red China and North Viet-Nam, two nonmembers, are very directly involved.

The balance that should be struck among these and other factors affecting the use of the UN cannot be confidently determined without further intensive study. Nevertheless, in the past months we have already taken some tentative steps looking toward UN involvement in Indochina. I am convinced that this path should not be abandoned without further intensive exploration and that this exploration should be undertaken at once.

I would certainly see grave disadvantages in extending the scope of the conference beyond Indochina. The question whether it should include all of Indochina—North Viet-Nam, Laos, and Cambodia, in addition to South Viet-Nam—is a tactical one to which we should give careful study. Certainly we have already dealt with Laos in the context of such a conference, and we have expended a good deal of capital in trying to prevent a conference in the case of Cambodia. But we should, I think, take a further look at this whole question within the context of our Southeast Asia policy.

CONCLUSION

I offer this memorandum not as a definitive document but as a challenge to the assumptions of our current Viet-Nam policy. I have tried to suggest areas of exploration that could lead to other options.

It may be observed that I have dwelt at length on the probable reaction of other countries to alternative lines of action. This is not because I believe that in formulating our foreign policy we should be unduly preoccupied with what others want us to do or that we should be continually looking over our shoulder. But our present line of policy has been justified primarily on political grounds. It has been defended on the proposition that America cannot afford to promote a settlement in South Viet-Nam without first demonstrating the superiority of its own military power—or, in other words, giving the North Vietnamese a bloody nose. To do otherwise would enormously diminish American prestige around the world and cause others to lose faith in the tenacity of our purpose and the integrity of our promises.

I have, therefore, sought to meet this thesis head-on by discussing the effect on governments and public opinion in other nations.

There are conspicuous *lacunae* in this very preliminary paper. I have not attempted, for example, to discuss the defense arrangements that we would have to make with Thailand or the possible need to reinforce British assurances with regard to Malaysia. I think it likely that the development of a political solution (whether or not preceded by an air offensive) might administer extreme unction to SEATO. But that is all a matter for further study.

What I am urging is that our Southeast Asian policy be looked at in all of its aspects and in the light of our total world situation. It is essential that this be done before we commit military forces to a line of action that could put events in the saddle and destroy our freedom to choose the policies that are at once the most effective and the most prudent. □

Spellings reproduced here, as in the original memorandum, were customary at the time it was written. Thus Viet-Nam (Vietnam), Peiping (Peking), and Red China (People's Republic of China).

Meanings of abbreviations are as follows: GVN—Govern-

ment of (South) Vietnam; ROK—Republic of (South) Korea; NVN—North Vietnam; ICC—International Control Commission for Vietnam; SNIE—Special National Intelligence Estimate; VC—Viet Cong; DRV—Democratic Republic of (North) Vietnam.

THE WAR IN THE BACK SEAT

by Alix Kates Shulman

In those days, nice girls didn't lead on the dance floor, or . . .

The revival of the forties and fifties is upon us. That Middle-American time of my youth is gaining its place in our historical imagination. Movies, essays, stories, novels, and the sheer passage of time have already begun transforming that era from banal to exotic. The record is being filled not only with nostalgia but with critical insight, as writing men of wit try to pin down those days. Nevertheless, something crucial is missing, for the reality being recorded about that era is essentially a male reality, the experience male experience. And until the female side is acknowledged and recorded, the era cannot even begin to emerge in perspective.

Richard Schickel, in a recent essay entitled "Growing Up in the Forties," tries to elucidate the factors that shaped Middle-American adolescence. After discussing sports (baseball and football, activities from which the female sex was barred) as "Middle America's only universal metaphor," he goes on to describe with regret those painful scenes in the back seats of parked cars where sex was meted out piecemeal. "The curve of a breast briefly explored by two sly fingers making their way . . . through some interstice in a girl's clothing," runs his plaintive lament—"oh, God, was this to be all, forever?" It is a lament endlessly repeated in most of the documents about those times. Gilbert Sorrentino's story "The Moon in Its Flight," Dan Wakefield's *Going All the Way*, Frederick Exley's *A Fan's Notes*, Philip Roth's *When She Was Good*, the screen's recent *Summer of '42*, *Carnal Knowledge*, and *The Last Picture Show*—however widely they may vary in tone, intent, subtlety, and success, all portray a monolithic male experience in which the War, movies, athletics, and the burden of sex denied emerge as the shaping forces of adolescent life, and girls, when presented at all, are the "problem."

The settings of my memories are frequently the same. Growing up in Ohio in the forties, I too was affected by those irresistible forces. Girls sat in the same movie theaters, attended the same football games, struggled in the back seats of the same parked cars. But the view from the bleachers is very different from the one on the field; and whether we gave in or held out in those parked cars, we had more fearsome concerns than simply making out. We were concerned with survival.

Our experience was no less important, our feelings no less urgent. Yet for some reason, only male versions have been recorded. Well, it certainly won't be the first time we were left out of the chronicles. Even back then it was the boys who delivered the graduation speeches; boys who got their pictures in the paper for football, win or lose; boys who, claiming the American privilege of free speech, spread slanderous things about us to boost their ratings. And the girls? The girls, when we were not simply ignored, were too often driven against our will to some dark lonely street where we were badgered or sweet-talked into going one step further than intended, and afterwards were frightened into silence. Only now are we beginning to speak.

Well, then—what was it like out there in a white middle-class suburban girl's Ohio in the cold decade between 1942 when I turned ten and 1952 when I turned twenty? What were we doing after school while the luckier boys were in varsity practice and the others were fielding high flies bounced off their garages? What were we feeling as we sat captive in our bedrooms waiting for our myriad pin curls to dry, the Hit Parade playing in the background? What forces, comparable in magnitude and significance to the War and athletics, shaped our emerging consciousness and thus our destiny? What was it like among the bobby-soxers? In the bleachers? In the passenger seat of those bor-

rowed cars in which boys drove us around and all too soon ruined everything by trying to feel us up?

In the early years of that decade we got together after school in each other's houses to talk about movie stars and play Monopoly, or to dress up in our mothers' clothes, jewelry, high heels, and lipstick, pretending we were seventeen going out on dates. If I couldn't ignore the sounds with which my brother filled up our house—his roar in the winter, his baseball games blasting on the radio in the summer—I tried to drown them out with my records of the Voice, over whom I actually "swooned"—my sexual initiation.

By the middle of the decade, wearing by then my own ruby lipstick, I got together with my friends in larger groups ("clubs," we called them in junior high, finding "sorority" too pretentious, though we gave our clubs Greek letter names), where we practiced for our futures by dancing among ourselves to the latest Big Band releases, leading and following by turns, and sometimes even practiced kissing.

After school I hung around the drugstore sipping nickel pop, or, sitting entranced in a listening booth of the local record store, tried to determine whose version of a recent hit was the best one out. I doodled certain initials on my notebooks, passed compromising notes in study hall, consulted a Ouija board about chancy matters, whispered, knitted argyle socks in class for a constantly changing secret someone until the teacher made me stop.

In the evenings when my radio programs were over, my share of the dishes done, my homework finished, my hair set in pin curls for the night, I confided in each of my girl friends on the telephone until my parents exploded. When I was sure nothing more could happen that day, I spilled my surging feelings to my five-year lockup diary, the very form of which led directly into the future. And once in bed, I would not surrender to sleep until the last possible moment, but listened to the radio I kept beside my pillow, memorizing the lyrics of every love song, the inflections of every vocalist, and the arrangements of every instrumental. Living for music and love.

Some of us were happy in love, more of us were sad—but in either case we lived for the next climactic installment of our own true romance. be it a rumor, a look, a word, or an actual date. It might come unexpectedly in a corridor between classes, or by careful design on a weekend—at the Saturday afternoon picture show, at our occasional Saturday night pajama parties, or at our mixers following school basketball or football games. Even if we loved no boy at all, we might fake it or boost a friend's romance in order to have material on which to base a whole new week's conspiracy and something to enter in our tear-smudged diaries. In lean times, we dedicated songs on the air, through the medium of snickering disc jockeys, to unsuspecting boys. ("Our songs," we called them, though we listened alone.)

On Friday nights, boys or no, we attended our club

meetings wearing each other's borrowed sweaters over Peter-Pan-collared dickies and pleated-all-round skirts in specified combinations (pink and maroon, baby blue and royal, cherry and white for a start), shod in saddle shoes or penny loafers. Brands mattered. Some of us kept our bobby socks up with colorless nail polish; others, ignoring our mothers' warnings about cutting off our blood circulation, kept them up with rubber bands. Sitting on the floor in one another's living rooms (with our hair still in pin curls, to be combed out only moments before the meeting ended and the boys arrived), we planned "affairs"—hayrides, sleighrides, movie parties, turn-about dances—to which we might legitimately invite the boys. Glorious 1944 and 1948: the leap years of my youth.

Oh, those clothes! We tried them on for hours in department stores, we changed our outfits repeatedly before each date. In the only novel I have seen by a woman covering approximately that era, Patricia Dizenzo's *An American Girl*, some of the most evocative passages are those in which the narrator describes the clothes.

If I had the money I would have bought a royal blue wool jumper . . . a maroon skirt to wear with a white sweater, a black and white plaid pleated wool skirt to wear with a long-sleeved red sweater, a black-watch plaid skirt to wear with a white or navy sweater, a gray wool straight skirt to wear with . . .

And more, more. I remember Teddy Bear coats, the New Look, White Shoulders perfume, pointy Whirlpool bras (not infrequently improved with cotton stuffing), Ipana smiles, eyelash curlers. We had to sharpen our wits and reward our bodies with something, we who never knew the joy of football!

And can there really have been nothing more for us than clothes, dancing, music, boys?

Alas, there really was nothing more. Little else was permitted. Just as the boys practiced tackling and developed game plans to prepare them, as Schickel says, for "the wins and losses of life, especially the former," we prepared for the only thinkable future available to us: marriage. Even the vocational counselors who took over Heights High School two days per semester hinted that the kind of secretarial position we ought to apply for—legal stenographer, dental assistant, executive secretary—should be keyed, respectively, to the kind of husband we hoped to nab; unless we were so unimprovably plain that we needed some more permanent vocation to "fall back on"—in which case, if we were "college caliber," we were urged to train as teachers, librarians, nurses, or dieticians.

In my own brief, sheltered life I had already seen how far one could go as a secretary. Ever ambitious, I had gone from band secretary (handing out the music) to homeroom secretary (handing out homework) to nurse's aid (handing out hall passes) to running for the highest female office in the school: school sec-

retary. When I lost, I ended my secretarial career.

We did sometimes go out for drama, for glee club, for art, for debating, piano, class politics, or even cheerleading (to this day I have yet to hear of a cheerleader scholarship to college); but the life they prepared us for was marriage, for that is the sum of what, for most of us, life consisted. As in later years when men may have positions and families while women have only families, so in high school boys had football and love while we had only love. When we cheered, we cheered the boys; whatever hobby we cultivated, it too led ultimately down the aisle.

By the end of the decade we were openly and frankly discussing the subject, with all its pitfalls and implications. What kind of husband did one want? What kind of wedding? How many children? How many bridesmaids? And trickiest of all—the part that gave us the heebie-jeebies—how in the world to snare one? For it was common knowledge that boys (who, with snowballs in winter and dunkings in summer, gave daily evidence of despising us) sought to avoid, or at least postpone, marriage as eagerly as we sought to achieve it. It was no secret. The entire culture conspired to show that life was a battle of the sexes: *them* against *us*. We knew, of course, that the boys would marry eventually; the question was, Could we get them to marry *us*? As Schickel observes, “It never occurred to us that there was some link between these [pinup] photos and the girls in school or the girls we passed in the streets,” and that fact was readily apparent. How get them to notice us without ruining our chances by putting out? Wakefield succinctly captures the predominant male attitude toward marriage, at least as it was expressed by Middle-American boys: “With the talk of marriage his prick had gone soft” (the very talk that held some promise of arousing us). Or, again: “Shit, he wouldn’t get married. He was getting laid all over Chi.” Such an attitude was simply impossible for a girl. In other places and other years a girl might manage to use sex to get a spouse (in *The Last Picture Show*, for example), but never, never to escape from one.

To snag a man. It was for that final, apocalyptic maneuver that I, like my sisters, wound up before the three-way mirror (as limiting as blinders and confining as a cage) practicing batting my eyes like Hedy Lamarr, flashing a smile like Betty Grable, wringing my hands like June Allyson, and night after night, equipped with comb, a glass of water for dipping, rubber-tipped bobby pins and metal clips, and a large triangular hairnet, setting my hair according to the instructions in every new issue of *Seventeen* magazine. As it was impossible for us to make our mark upon the world (except, eventually, through offspring), we had nowhere to make it but on ourselves. The mark to make and how to make it was all spelled out for us in every document of female ado-

lescence: if our faces were round, we set our pin curls in one direction; if our jaws were square we set them in another. But no matter how we started out, if we studied the magazines and the movies and each other carefully enough, we could come up with the perfect formula for enhancing our assets.

Back in the early days, I confess, I wanted more. I remember pledging my daily allegiance to our 48-star flag with such ardor that my voice quavered and brought me ridicule. When the War started, I collected old newspapers and flattened tin cans with as much enthusiasm as my brother. And as a young teen-ager, I dreamed of getting a factory job—as much for the daring and glamour of it as for productivity and patriotism. But by that time my parents had only to convince me that, despite Veronica Lake and Rosie the Riveter, nice girls didn’t work in factories (even though nice boys did) to induce me to abandon the ambition. Just as nice girls didn’t wear too-tight skirts, or stockings to school, or their hair upswept.

In fact, the older we got, the longer grew the list of inviting things that nice girls didn’t do. (*Nice Girl?*, with Deanna Durbin, was the first adult movie I ever saw. And though I didn’t understand it at the time, I accepted the fact that the phrase “nice girl” would always be followed by a question mark.) Nice girls didn’t smoke on the street. Nice girls didn’t kiss on the first date. Nice girls didn’t lead on the dance floor. Nice girls didn’t curse (or allow cursing in their presence). Except to ask an opening question about sports, nice girls didn’t take the initiative in conversation. Nice girls didn’t show they were smart, speak out of turn, laugh at risqué jokes, hang around the football field or the pool hall, go unaccompanied to bowling alleys, dance halls, movies, beaches, skating rinks—anywhere, really, except to two or three specified restaurants. Nice girls didn’t wear their heels the wrong height, their sweaters without slips, the wrong kind of bras, their hair the wrong style. Nice girls didn’t talk to boys to whom they hadn’t been introduced, clinch too long with boys to whom they had, and more important still, talk to girls who weren’t nice girls.

With such a list of prohibitions—and plenty more coming up behind—who wouldn’t want to light out like Huck and every other red-blooded American boy for the territories? Or at least go off on a weekend tear? But unfortunately, nice girls didn’t do that either. Nice girls didn’t even stay out after midnight unchaperoned.

And if we did? If, out of some adventurous spirit or sexual desire that managed to survive the poison of our puberty, we did break the rules—what happened then? We risked nothing less than our futures. A few lucky ones (I have met two or three), finding boys they could trust, actually managed to have good sex—a miracle, considering how dangerous a game they played. But for the rest of us, even the possibility of good sex disappeared before the specter of

what we might be losing. For we risked losing the one asset that kept us listed on the Big Board in the Marriage Market—"respect"—and getting instead the one that scratched us off—a "reputation." And once that occurred, a girl turned from a nice girl, who at least had the right (as well as the duty) to protest a boy's sexual advances, into a "real girl," against whom anything went. According to conventional wisdom, ridicule was the least she deserved, but even rape, particularly if done in a gang, was forgivable.

The hero of Exley's *A Fan's Notes* relates the circumstances of his sexual initiation:

My initiation into sex had taken place on the ground behind a billboard sign advertising beer. . . . The girl had received, with neither complaint nor enthusiasm, a good part of Watertown High School's 1945 football team. Afterward I had had to help her up and walk her, while she clung unsteadily to my arm and wept, to her house some distance down the highway.

In Wakefield's novel a slightly different sort of group spirit is shown to operate against the girl with a reputation:

. . . whatever happened to Donna Mae Orlick [?]

Big Quinn hooted and slapped his knee. "Married," he said. "Settled down. Can ya picture it?"

"How'd it happen?" Gunner asked, in the tone of a man inquiring about a great pianist who had lost his fingers.

"Some guy from Terre Haute knocked her up. She had a pie in the oven, and the guy married her."

"Shit," Gunner said, "couldn't he have got three witnesses to testify?"

It was said that if a girl got pregnant and you could get three other guys to testify they had fucked her, too, there was some law that said you didn't have to marry her because she was a loose woman or something. . . .

"Buddy, you talk about *three*—he could of got three *hundred*," Big Quinn said. "But the guy was from *Terre Haute*. He didn't *know*."

In Philip Roth's *When She Was Good*, the hero, Roy Bassart, speculates about the possibilities of getting into a cheerleader, Ginger Donnelly:

This fellow named Muffin . . . said that his friends over in Winnisaw told him that at a party across the river one night, back in Ginger's freshman year . . . she had practically taken on the whole Winnisaw football team. The reason nobody knew about it was because the truth was immediately suppressed by the Catholic priest, who threatened to have all those involved thrown in jail for rape if even one of them opened his mouth.

It was a typical Muffin story, and yet some guys actually believed it—though Roy wasn't one.

In fact, the image of the "real girl" who winds up "taking on the entire team" turns up again and again in male books about Middle America in that era. Whether she existed or not (and in either case, it was certainly not we who created her), she was always there in our consciousness, the terrible threat, the liv-

ing alternative to being "good." No wonder, then, that my most intense memory of adolescence is that anxious moment in the back seat of the car (one scenario, many actors), after my lipstick has been smeared and my hair irreparably mussed, yet before my "please stop now" has been overruled, turning a promising intimacy into an anxious struggle.

It was the boys who put us in those compromising positions (we never asked to be driven to those dark streets), the boys who decided whether or not they would tell (we always begged them not to), the boys who imposed our dilemmas, knowing perfectly well what would happen to us if they went too far. Then why is it that men writing about the forties and fifties so frequently misunderstand our concern with our reputations? Some of them, like Exley, find it mean and contemptible, some find it silly, dog-in-the-manger, or simply misguided. But few understand it as a survival response; few allow the legitimacy of our fears. To most of them it is simply the unfortunate source of their bad sex. Even in such a generally sympathetic story as Sorrentino's sensitive "The Moon in Its Flight," it is assumed that girls desired sex as much as boys, that it was only social circumstances or blind allegiance to a code that kept us apart.

But the fact is, for many of us who grew up in those days, once we understood the real consequences of indulging in sex, sex became a genuinely horrifying thing, not desirable at all. Even if it could have been practiced with finesse, which under the circumstances was hardly possible, who among us could have abandoned herself to it happily, knowing the consequences? When we said no, when we struggled to get the boys' hands off our breasts, when we crossed our legs in rigid rejection of those ubiquitous probing fingers, it was not because we were blindly, stupidly accepting some code handed down by our mothers. Our concern with virginity was not something we learned, as Schickel suggests, at the movies; not some gleeful conspiracy among us to deny boys their pleasure or some perverse way to titillate. It was hardly a matter of "pleasure" at all. The question of pregnancy quite aside, we early learned to ignore our reputations at our peril because of the sanctions that *they* imposed upon *us*—sanctions so damaging to our sexuality that many of us never managed to recover. Like the characters in the Feiffer-Nichols movie *Carnal Knowledge*, boys made it quite clear to us that there were certain kinds of girls they simply would not care to marry. In the cliché of the period, we had "nothing to gain and everything to lose" from submitting—as they had the very opposite. Nor was it a simple double standard we had to contend with; it was an inverse one, whereby, diabolically, we lost to the extent that they won, and vice versa. And worse: for if they lost, if they failed to "score" or even get, as they so blatantly analogized, to "first base," they

were always free to try it again next inning. At best they wasted an evening's effort. But if one of us lost, we risked losing for good; once we gave in, we could never again expect our protests to be heeded.

Why did we cling to our reputations? As the fox who failed to catch the hare explained, "I was running for my dinner, but he was running for his life." Perhaps if we had been permitted access to some of life's touted rewards through other routes than sex and marriage; perhaps if the boys had been happy to marry us despite our reputations; perhaps if they had known how to keep their mouths shut or offered us reasonably good sex, we might then have been tempted to relent a little. But instead they offered us battle and frequently contempt. Not even nice girls were safe from it. "Where I had come from," says the narrator of *A Fan's Notes*,

seducing a "nice" girl was hard work. In the back seat of wintry cars one chewed on lower lips for longer periods of time than starlets cohabit with producers. One moved lower then, leaving a trail of perfumed saliva on ears and necks along the way, coming to plant already swollen lips on wool-sweatered nipples . . . meeting convulsive, furious hands all the way. . . . Even if one did make it . . . one didn't dare look down in fear of seeing a half-dressed, broken-bra'ed, bedraggled, pimply, snot-nosed, shivery-assed creature feigning her conscience-inducing sleep, trying not to moan.

On balance, given the circumstances, I think we did well to fight them. When Betty Grable in some old movie of the forties whacked Don Ameche across the face for trying to kiss her, I think she probably had the appropriate impulse for the period.

In a recent issue of *Esquire* with a supplement on the forties and a Petty Girl swinging on the cover there is the statement: "The Forties were—well, *natural*, without pretense or guile."

Without pretense or guile? Boys among themselves, perhaps, where we could not overhear them (*Esquire* should know); in the locker room or the barracks maybe; but between boys and girls, as I recall, it was primarily pretense and guile. In fact, one reason we have such a hard time getting the story straight about those days is that evidently no one ever told the truth. About the thing that mattered most for us, our reputations, there were only lies. Whatever the boys did with the girls, they claimed to have done more; at the very least it was kiss and tell. ("It was really pretty much of a failure," says the narrator of *Going All the Way*, "if you parked with a girl and got only covered-tit, and sometimes when Sonny just got covered-tit he actually lied if anyone asked and said he got bare-tit.") As for us, whatever we did or we didn't, we denied everything all the same.

Without pretense or guile? From *A Fan's Notes*:

If we were lucky . . . we ended in the sack with some long-legged, energetic, none-too-bright airline hostess who afterward wept while we assured her of our undying devotion, even as we plotted how to get rid of the creep.

From *Going All the Way*:

She thought Gunner's name was Ron. That was for safety, so if you ever knocked up one of those broads, they couldn't track you down. That's why Gunner introduced Sonny as "George."

And even the young Catcher in the Rye, Holden Caulfield, Mr. Guileless-Charms himself, whose life was devoted to eschewing the "phony," whose dream spot was a cabin in the woods where "if anybody tried to do anything phony, they couldn't stay"—even Holden confesses to the usual equivocal back-seat-of-the-car hanky-panky:

At first she didn't want to, because she had her lipstick on and all, but I was being seductive as hell and she didn't have any alternative. . . . Just to show you how crazy I am, when we were coming out of this big clinch, I told her I loved her and all. It was a lie, of course, but the thing is I *meant* it when I said it. I'm crazy. I swear to God I am.

And maybe Roy Bassart meant it too, in Philip Roth's spectacularly accurate parked-car scenes in *When She Was Good* (a book which, though widely hailed as the definitive portrait of the Great American Bitch, seems to recognize, even to understand, the Middle-American girl's plight—and yet still manages to blame her for all the awful consequences):

There [at Passion Paradise] Roy would turn off the lights, flip on the radio, and try with all his might to get her to go all the way.

"Roy, I want to leave now. Really."

"Why?"

"I want to go home, please."

"I sort of love you, you know that."

"Don't say that. You don't." . . .

In the back he told her how much he could love her. He was pulling at her uniform buttons.

"Everybody says things like that when they want what you want, Roy. Stop. Please stop. I don't want to do this. Honestly. Please."

"But it's the *truth*," he said, and his hand, which had touched down familiarly on her knee, went like a shot up her leg.

"No, *no*—"

"Yes!" he cried triumphantly. "*Please!*" . . .

"Roy—!"

"But I love you. Actually now I do." . . .

[And a little later:] "You say love," Lucy said. "But you don't mean love."

"I get carried away, Lucy. That's not a lie. I get carried away, by the mood. I like music, so it affects me. So that's not a 'lie.'"

Yes, even Richard Schickel, in whose innocence I believe and with whose longings I sympathize—even he will have to admit there was something less than guileless and certainly less than understanding going

on in the parked cars where he and his friends hoped that “somehow in our pawings, pleadings and arguments we would stumble upon that magic combination of verbal and (shall we say?) subverbal appeals that would loosen the hold that virginity as a concept” had upon girls.

Most of the writers and directors who have been reconstructing the forties and fifties for us have kept a certain distance from their period characters; they are clearly moved by something other than nostalgia. Those were not pretty times, and most of the writers who survived them seem to want to expose them. Feiffer’s protagonists in *Carnal Knowledge* are shown to be the same sexual bullies as the boys I remember. The grim adolescent sex scenes in Bogdanovich’s *The Last Picture Show*—hands rigidly clapped on thigh or breast without passion, much less tenderness, the very opposite of caresses—are remembered rightly with bitterness. Nevertheless, the girls are still presented neither with sympathy nor understanding. Somehow, when the stories are all over, when the callowness and conformity, elitism and racism of the time and place have been exposed and decried, the girls still come off looking like cock-teasers and ball-busters, or else, in the most cutting insult of the period, “beasts.” In all those documents of the time of my youth, whether movie, essay, story, or novel, in those crucial battles in the back row of the movie house or on the floor in the living room or out behind

the backstop or in the darkened back seat of a parked car—those scenes which are the very essence of pretense and guile—the girls somehow always wind up the culprits, bitchy or ridiculous, damned if they do and damned again if they don’t.

It is that scene, with all its variations, that for me stands out as the paradigm of the era, as “Middle America’s universal metaphor.” Not sports (no, forgive me, boys, not even football, without which, says Exley, life would have been inconceivable); not dancing, though at least that activity was open to both sexes and conformed in important respects to life’s larger expectations (Holden Caulfield, the nicest sixteen-year-old boy in America, says: “Do you know when a girl’s really a terrific dancer? . . . If I think there isn’t anything underneath my hand—no can, no legs, no feet, no *anything*—then the girl’s really a terrific dancer”); not yo-yoing, for which Frank Conroy in *Stop-Time* (as well as Abbie Hoffman in *Esquire*) makes such an inspired case. Not the Army, not the movies, not Captain Midnight or the Shadow. No. But if the Battle of Waterloo, as Wellington claims, was won on the playing fields of Eton; if the fate of Indochina, as Schickel suggests, was set on the scrimmage lines of Whittier, California; then the destiny of the female half of Middle America in times gone by was settled in the dirty back seat of some parked car as the male half relentlessly tried to score. □

OLD GIRL

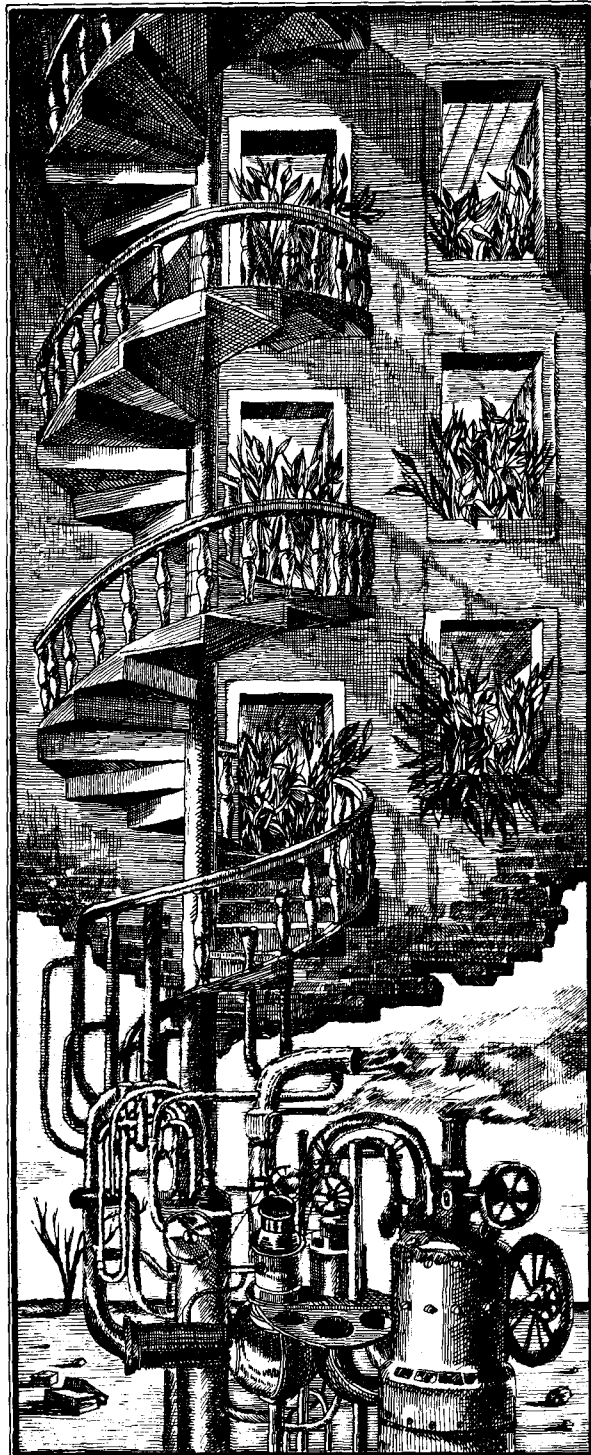
She is more than ninety, almost at the end of her course;
A wise old lady, you’d say, if you said it right;
Yet she keeps the same expectation she had as a girl:
Her eyes, which welcomed her day, are wide open for night.

Will she mind dying? You wouldn’t ask, if you knew her.
She’ll take it when it comes like a job that needs to be done;
She’s used to shouldering things other people have shirked.
When the sun finally sets, she’ll willingly go with the sun.

by T. S. Matthews

SCIENCE: A TECHNOCRATIC TRAP

by Theodore Roszak



Eugene Michalevich

The day of the great lone wolves, embattled heretics, and outsiders—the Faradays, the Galileos, the Pasteurs, toiling away in modest laboratories and private garrets with makeshift equipment—is gone. Bigness, thickly structured professionalism, and government-corporation subvention have become indispensable to the progress of both research and development.

It is roughly a century since European art began to experience its first significant defections from the standards of painting and sculpture that we inherit from the early Renaissance. Looking back now across a long succession of innovative movements and stylistic revolutions, most of us have little trouble recognizing that such aesthetic orthodoxies of the past as the representative convention, exact anatomy and optical perspective, the casement-window canvas, along with the repertory of materials and subject matters we associate with the Old Masters—that all this makes up not “art” itself in any absolute sense, but something like a *school* of art, one great tradition among many. We acknowledge the excellence which a Raphael or Rembrandt could achieve within the canons of that school; but we have grown accustomed to the idea that there are other aesthetic visions of equal validity. Indeed, innovation in the arts has become a convention in its own right with us, a “tradition of the new,” to such a degree that there are critics to whom it seems to be intolerable that any two painters should paint alike. We demand radical originality, and often confuse it with quality.

Yet what a jolt it was to our great-grandparents to see the certainties of the academic tradition melt away before their eyes. How distressing, especially for the academicians, who were the guardians of a classic heritage embodying time-honored techniques and standards whose perfection had been the labor of genius. Suddenly they found art as they understood it being rejected by upstarts who were unwilling to let a single premise of the inherited wisdom stand unchallenged, or so it seemed. Now, with a little hindsight, it is not difficult to discern continuities where our predecessors saw only ruthless disjunctions. To see, as well, that the artistic revolutionaries of the past were, at their best, only opening our minds to a more global conception of art which demanded a deeper experience of light, color, and form. Through their work, too, the art of our time has done much to salvage the values of the primitive and

childlike, the dream, the immediate emotional response, the life of fantasy, and the transcendent symbol.

In our own day, much the same sort of turning point has been reached in the history of science. It is as if the aesthetic ground pioneered by the artists now unfolds before us as a new ontological awareness. We are at a moment when the reality to which scientists address themselves comes more and more to be recognized as but one segment of a far broader spectrum. Science, for so long regarded as our single valid picture of the world, now emerges as, also, a school: a *school of consciousness*, beside which alternative realities take their place.

There are, so far, only fragile and scattered beginnings of this perception. They are still the subterranean history of our time. How far they will carry toward liberating us from the orthodox world view of the technocratic establishment is still doubtful. These days, many gestures of rebellion are subtly denatured, adjusted, and converted into oaths of allegiance. In our society at large, little beyond submerged unease challenges the lingering authority of science and technique, that dull ache at the bottom of the soul we refer to when we speak (usually too glibly) of an "age of anxiety," an "age of longing." The disease is as yet largely unmentionable, like the cancer one would rather ignore than reveal for diagnosis. The political leadership, the experts and academicians, the publicists and opinion makers prefer for the most part to regard the condition of spiritual disintegration in which we live (if they admit that there is a problem at all) as no worse than a minor ailment for which some routine wonder drug will soon be found. Modern man—so runs the by now journalistic commonplace—is "in search of a soul." But this, like all the snags in the system, only attracts its quota of "problem-solvers," fair-haired young men with bright new techniques for filling "the meaning-and-purpose gap." Presidents summon together blue-ribbon committees on "national goals," and major corporations open up lunchtime "therapy tanks" for vaguely distraught employees. Specialists in "future shock" step forward to recommend strategies for adapting bedazzled millions to the mad pace of industrial progress. Always, always it is another dose of R&D, another appeal to expertise that will cure us.

Another point that helps to obscure the cultural crisis of our time. One need only glance beyond the boundaries of the high industrial heartland to see our science-based technics rolling across the globe like a mighty juggernaut, obliterating every alternative style of life. It is difficult not to be flattered by our billions of envious imitators. Though they revile the rich white West, we nonetheless know that we are the very incarnation of the "development" they long for. And if all the world wants what we have got, must we not then be *right*? Are we not the standard for all that progress and modernity mean?

But it is a pathetic self-deception to beguile the impotent and hungry with our power and opulence, and then to seek the validation of our existence by virtue of all that is most wretched in them . . . their dire need, their ignorance of where our standard of development leads, their desperate covetousness. Such easy self-congratulation has no proper place in a serious assessment of our condition. There are those of our fellows who still struggle to enter the twentieth century. Their search for human dignity sets them that task, perhaps as a necessary stage in cultural evolution. There are those of us who are now *in* the century (who have indeed *made* this century), and our task is another—possibly one which the underdeveloped will scarcely appreciate. They pin their highest hopes to science and technique, even as our ancestors did. Our job is to review the strange course that science and technique have traveled and the price we have paid for their cultural triumph.

We must consider the devolution of the scientific tradition, which is destined, I think, to be the most important cultural event of our generation. For many, the decline and fall of scientific orthodoxy may seem—if it is conceivable at all—like a despicable reversion to barbarism, a betrayal of reason that threatens a new dark age. But there is another way to view the matter. The barbarian may be at the gate because the empire has decayed from within. He may even come to voice well-justified grievances which, for the good of our souls, we dare not ignore.

If along the countercultural fringes of our society, science now loses its ability to shape the consciousness of people, I believe this is for reasons that emerge from within science itself. It is due to serious failures and limitations that can be traced to the heart of the scientific enterprise, but which only the achievement of cultural supremacy could make vividly apparent. These might be called the negative potentialities of the scientific world view, long hidden from sight but now unmistakably visible. Taken together, they explain why our unstinting commitment to single vision has led us not to the promised New Jerusalem but to the technocratic trap we find closing about us.

Science, like all things human, has its history. It too suffers the ironies of change, and probably in no respect more obviously than in its institutional development. Especially since the end of World War II, science, as a profession, has become big, official, capital intensive, and bureaucratic, which is to say, its heroic age has ended. The day of the great lone wolves, embattled heretics, and outsiders—the Faradays, the Galileos, the Pasteurs, toiling away in modest laboratories and private garrets with makeshift equipment—is at least two generations behind us and not only gone, but *never* to be recovered.

Bigness, thickly structured professionalism, and

government-corporation subvention have become indispensable to the progress of both research and development. Science, being objective, is cumulative; its knowledge detaches from the knower (supposedly without loss) and piles up. Thus science exhausts intellectual terrain as it races forward. This is what "progress" means in the world of scientific research; this is the peculiar pride of the discipline. Metaphysicians may still dispute questions drawn from Plato or St. Thomas. Artists may recompose still lives as old as Vermeer. But in science, problems get solved; as Thomas Kuhn would put it, the paradigms get filled in and the profession moves on to occupy new ground. Each solution may, of course, raise new questions, so that the province of the unknown remains always there to challenge study. But the new questions are *further out*; they recede like an ever expanding frontier. Therefore, it requires more intensive specialization, more teamwork, more sophisticated equipment to catch hold of a piece of that traveling frontier. So, as time goes on, there must be *more scientists, more money, more coordination of research, more administrative superstructure, and, all together, more political maneuvering within the scientific community, as well as between science and its society.*

Just as the Church of the Renaissance Popes was a far cry from the Church of the martyrs in their catacombs, so the science of what Norbert Wiener once called "the science factories" is hardly that of Galileo in his workshop. It is a very different institution, and of necessity a far less appealing one. It has forfeited its human scale, and that is a grave loss. It means that science, too, joins in the ethos of impersonal gigantism, which is among the most oppressive features of our Kafkaesque modern world. When the layman views science today, he no longer finds there a community of self-actualizing men and women pursuing their chosen calling with style, daring, and simple passion. Such individuals may, of course, be there; but they are lost from sight within an establishment of baroque complexity, an acronymous labyrinth of official hierarchies and elite conferences, of bureaus and agencies filled with rich careers and mandarin status.

Already the world of Big Science has seen instances of opportunistic lobbying that reach the level of major scandal. The infamous Mohole Project of the mid-sixties which wasted nearly a hundred million dollars in a futile attempt to drill a hole through the earth's crust is but the most notable example of how willing scientists can be to bamboozle their way aboard the federal gravy train. Mohole was sanctimoniously justified as "pure research" at every appropriation along the way, but finally collapsed without result in the midst of several highly suspect subcontracting concessions. The purposeful obfuscation and special pleading that have long surrounded the AEC's extravagant nuclear-testing programs (overground and underground) and the unseemly

competition of the universities for the federal funding of high-energy accelerators offer further melancholy examples of major scientific talent taking expensive advantage of the public gullibility.

Nor have the natural scientists been alone in their haste to gain official patronage. The several behavioral science professions have been every bit as eager (if less successful) to cut themselves in on the prestige of government sponsorship. They have long lobbied for a nicely endowed National Foundation for the Social Sciences to match the National Science Foundation. Meanwhile they have accepted the support of military and paramilitary agencies to finance high-cost, computerized research in counterinsurgency warfare or behavioral modeling. At times, their arguments have been as barefacedly nationalistic as that of any bomb physicist—as when Professor Kingsley Davis argued before Congress in 1967 that "the first nation which breaks through the barrier and manages to put social science on a footing at least as sound as that of the natural sciences will be way ahead of every other nation in the world. I would like to see the United States be that nation. . . ."

Obviously, clever minds continue to enter Big Science; we know they must be clever because their colleagues tell us so, and all the colleagues reward one another grandly. But it is as Daniel Greenberg, author of *The Politics of Pure Science*, observes:

With the mechanization of much scientific research, it is now possible to function and thrive in scientific research without the sense of inspiration and commitment that characterized the community in its penurious days. Science was once a calling; today it is still a calling for many but for many others, it is simply a living, and an especially comfortable one. . . .

Unavoidably, this routinizing and collectivization of research deprive us of the element of sympathetic personality in science—the clear perception of outstanding, often eccentric individuality. More and more, those of us on the outside see Big Science (like Big Technics) as a featureless personnel—teams, groups, committees, staffs arranged around entrepreneurial leaders. But more important, such routinization selects a different breed of scientist, an organization man whose work is delicately geared to the technocratic imperatives: efficient group dynamics, submission to the powers, a proper respect for official channels and institutional procedures. As Michael Reagan, author of *Science and the Federal Patron*, observes, "Today, team research might even be said to *require* some unimaginative plodders," and therefore "some net loss in free-wheeling imagination, some tendency to shy away from the high-risk projects because future support might be endangered by failure to achieve positive results."

Is there, in fact, anyone in our society who has a keener awareness than the scientist and technician of

how incomparably *productive* the technocratic style can be—or of how richly rewarding “careerwise”? Of course the protest arises, “But contemporary science and technology are inconceivable without minute specialization, teamwork, sophisticated equipment, and much official patronage.” Perhaps so. But *if* so, then the last place we must expect to look for an alternative to technocracy is among the scientists and technicians, for whom technocratic forms of organization and finance have become their professional life’s blood.

Further, with the advent of Big Science and Big Technics, there is the growing congestion of discovery and invention. So much of everything . . . and too much to keep track of. Inevitability hangs over every breakthrough; if it had not come this year, then surely next. For with enough money and brains applied to the task, are not “positive results” bound to follow? So there is more and more the cloying sense that innovation has become routine, the spectacular ordinary. The excitement of the scientific enterprise cannot help diminishing with overstimulation. True, the public still gasps and blinks at the achievements unveiled before it; it has little else to expend its wonderment upon in the artificial environment. But even the admiration descends to cliché; the words “miracle” and “marvel” come too readily to the lips. One begins to *expect* the miraculous—an obvious contradiction—to such an extent that it takes a near disaster (like that of Apollo 13) to remind us that the wizards are yet fallible. Then, at the price of great risk, some touch of “human interest” is lent to the well-oiled project. And there is too much lime-lighted posturing by the astronauts and the research teams and the Nobel Prize laureates—all of them playing the same tiresome role over and again: the boyish modesty, the understatement, the winsome embarrassment at the applause. Meanwhile, on the other side, there are those of us who grow fatigued with endlessly applauding. One simply cannot send up a cheer for every last item that comes tumbling off the mass-production conveyor belt.

It is just this sense one has of intellectual impaction within the world of science that has led several observers (Eugene Wigner, Alvin Weinberg, Bentley Glass, Kenneth Boulding) to speculate that scientific research may fast be approaching the point of diminishing returns in its hyper-productivity. Perhaps there is an absolute limit of research, an “entropy trap,” as Boulding calls it, where the difficulties of communication and data retrieval monopolize all available energy. “It is quite easy to visualize a situation, perhaps in 100 years,” Boulding remarks, “in which the stock of knowledge will be so large that the whole effort of the knowledge industry will have to be devoted to transmitting it from one generation to the next.”

Already, Alvin Weinberg comments, it is nearly a full-time job for those at the top of their profession to keep up with the expansion of general theory in

science. The standard journals can no longer process the glut; the use of semiprivate mailing lists, informal newsletters, conference abstracts, and preprint circuits increases by the year. By the time new knowledge has had the chance to be assimilated further down the hierarchy, it has often been undone or modified at the top. Accordingly, Weinberg has suggested the creation of “information centers” filled with “brokers” and “compacters of literature,” whose role will be no more than to tally, file, and pass along the inflow of knowledge. There have been numerous proposals of the kind, a sure sign of overdevelopment.

Perhaps such conjectures about the limits of professional expansion—like the recurrent rumors one hears of entire fields of study such as high-energy physics being played out—are exaggerated. But the mass-production character of Big Science is real enough and lies heavy as a pall over its public image. Never a week goes by but another ingenious astonishment is launched out of the research mills and across the front pages. The scene begins to smell of press agency and public relations. One cannot help wondering where the genuine research and development leave off and the journalistic grandstanding begins.

Our ecological troubles are now common knowledge and hot politics; they require no detailed review here. What does need emphasis is the critical relationship between our environmental bad habits and the devolution of the scientific tradition.

It might seem unfair to lay the blame for impending environmental disaster at the doorstep of the scientists. Granted, the rape of the environment has been carried out, not by scientists, but by profiteering industrialists and myopic developers, with the eager support of a burgeoning population greedy to consume more than nature can provide and to waste more than nature can clear away. But to absolve the scientific community from complicity in the matter is quite simply to ignore that science has been the only natural philosophy the Western world has known since the age of Newton. It is to ignore the key question: who provided us with the image of nature that invited the rape and with the sensibility that has licensed it? It is not, after all, the normal thing for people to ruin their environment. It is extraordinary and requires extraordinary incitement.

The scientific community cannot claim credit for our exponential economic and technical growth, and then beg off responsibility for what that impetuous growth has cost us in environmental stability. Nor can science, for all the good intentions that have motivated its labors, be excused for abetting the arrogance that still blinds so many to the values of alternative world views.

Because science has been linked (commendably) to

a liberal political ethic in Western society, it is easy to overlook how systematically the scientific community has managed to disparage such alternatives over the past two centuries—until, at last, there is nowhere else our society has been able to look but to science for authoritative instruction about nature. To turn elsewhere has meant being written off as witlessly superstitious or inanely “Romantic.” There are many subtle ways to enforce cultural orthodoxy; the scientists have done it by encouraging a smug airtight consensus around the power and plenty that flow from their kind of knowledge. What has fallen outside that consensus has been treated with cold neglect or crushing ridicule. For example, in one of the standard anthropology texts of the past generation, Alfred Kroeber without hesitation identifies the adoption of the scientific attitude as a prime criterion of cultural “progress.” The alternative to science is “magic and superstition,” and “in proportion as a culture disengages itself from reliance on these, it may be said to have registered an advance.” Where deviation from scientific rationality occurs in our society, he observes, it is “chiefly among individuals whose social fortune is backward or who are psychotic, mentally deteriorated, or otherwise subnormal.” Obviously, the views of “the most ignorant, warped and insane” among us are not to be taken seriously. “Or,” Kroeber asks rhetorically, “are our discards, insane, and hypersuggestibles right and the rest of us wrong?”

It is just this stubborn prejudice in favor of single vision which has for so long closed our science off from that wise sense of natural harmony and wholeness, that knowledge of vital transaction between people and nature, which we now associate with the study of ecology. Surely the most remarkable fact about ecology is how late it arrived upon the scientific scene as a well-developed, publicly influential discipline. It was only in the very late nineteenth century that special studies of plant and animal ecology began to appear in biology, but without any great impact on science as a whole. No one, for example, has ever claimed for their fields the “revolutionary” importance granted to quantum theory, even though the ecological sensibility is a far sharper break with tradition.

As for the more critical, comprehensive study of Human Ecology (which is the style of ecology that now commands so much public attention), this does not emerge from the natural sciences at all. Rather, it traces back to a remarkable book published in 1864, *Man and Nature: Physical Geography as Modified by Human Action*. Its author, George Perkins Marsh, was not a scientist, but a diplomat and linguist; yet his work stands as the source of the modern conservation movement. His was the first significant study of how much damage human beings can do to their environment by “operations which, on a large scale, interfere with the spontaneous arrangements of the organic or the inorganic world,” and the first

prominent appeal to the industrial societies for “the restoration of disturbed harmonies” in nature. Closer to our own time, Human Ecology—both the name and the discipline—takes its origin from the writing of the offbeat sociologist Robert Ezra Park, who gave the study its vogue during the 1920s and 1930s. But after this brief, rather modish period of popularity, Human Ecology drifted to the margins of intellectual life, leaving little mark on the standard university curriculum. Only the recent panic reaction to the environmental crisis has ushered the ecologists, at last, into their proper, central place in the sciences.

At what point before the present eleventh hour did our natural philosophers step forward in creditable numbers to support the simple compassion of conservationists and nature lovers? From Bacon and Descartes to the present day, the same unhealthy images of the scientific project have been repeated with dismal insistence. Either we have the picture of the human being standing apart from nature as isolated spectator, or we have the picture of mankind aggressively asserting itself against nature as (in Descartes’ phrase) “lords and possessors.” One can easily imagine the protest: the task of the scientist is to tell us how nature works, not how it is to be used well. But is science then to be pardoned on the grounds that it has systematically taught our society to regard knowledge as a thing apart from wisdom? Surely, where our ecological debacle is concerned, that is not a defense, but a confession of guilt.

The Judeo-Christian estrangement from nature was absorbed into the psychology of scientific knowledge, there to find a new epistemological dignity. Objective knowing is alienated knowing; and alienated knowing is, sooner or later, ecologically disastrous knowing. Before the earth could become an industrial garbage can, it had first to become a research laboratory.

When Bacon first called upon mankind “to unite forces against the nature of things, to storm and occupy her castles and strongholds and extend the bounds of human empire,” the ambition, though unbecoming, could be safely entertained. There was relatively little damage the human race could then do to its environment. The arrogance was as innocuous as it was exhilarating. But within the past few generations the scale of applied science has become global, and more than great enough to reveal the once negligible implications of the New Philosophy. Just as infinitesimal blemishes in a photograph may become prominent only when the picture is sufficiently enlarged, so the vastness of contemporary technical enterprise has magnified the innermost meaning of the scientific world view and revealed its full ecological ignorance.

We deal now in a technology that alters the climates of entire continents and threatens to murder the flora and fauna of whole oceans. Compulsively optimistic technicians may continue to talk of finding a quick technological fix for every problem; but does

it not grow clearer by the day that they are woefully out of tune with the environment they claim to understand? They promise to feed the hungry by way of green revolutions and the harvest of the seas. But the World Health Organization reports that what most immediately results from the saturation use of DDT as part of green revolution technique (monocultures dependent on chemical fertilizers and heavy pesticidal treatment) is the ruinous contamination of mothers' milk. Perhaps in societies where nursing is common and prolonged this might be regarded as a grisly form of population control imposed surreptitiously by the demands of progress, a sort of developmental sleight of hand which increases the crops and poisons the babies. Meanwhile, the rising levels of oil, pesticides, nitrate runoff, and methyl mercury in the lakes and oceans threaten to eliminate fish from the diet of an underfed world long before the seas will be harvested.

The importance of the environmental crisis for the future of our culture is that it forces upon all of us in urban-industrialized society a terrible, inescapable awareness of how intolerably high the price is of our Baconian power-knowledge. At the very least, all of us must suffer the immediate discomforts of "development blight" (quaint phrase!), the noise, the foul smells, the corrosive anguish of the eyes and throat, the devastation of amenities. For most people, ecological politicking still seems to reach no further than such issues, taken up piecemeal as necessity dictates and always with the hope that minor adjustments will serve—like building the airport or freeway somewhere else. But even this superficial sense of the problem can be enough to raise bothersome doubts about the meaning of industrial progress. For once real issues are joined and the easy ecological platitudes evaporate, are not the government and the corporate spokesmen quick to castigate the comfort-and-amenity-conscious citizenry for being Luddites and to warn them that the clock must not be turned back? Suddenly, it becomes a subversion of progress to assert the commonsensible principle that communities exist for the health and enjoyment of those who live in them, not for the convenience of those who drive through them, fly over them, or exploit their real estate for profit. After all, the argument runs, the factories, freeways, and airports must be built somewhere, must they not? The economy *depends* on them. And so it does. Given the life-style demanded by the artificial environment, the economy is bound to be anti-environmental.

As that realization sinks into the general awareness, the great Western myth of progress and the science that is tied to it suffer skeptical examination. In what sense have we "progressed" if we now come to such a pass? By what right do we claim to possess a uniquely reliable knowledge of nature? Operational success has, supposedly, been the ultimate validation of scientific knowledge. Science is true, we have been told over and over again, because "*it*

works." But now we discover that the scientific world view does *not* work. Not if our outlook is holistic. Not if we consider the long run—which, in the case of industrial society, seems to be about two centuries. More and more it looks as if the future were not destined to be an endless escalator of improvement. Rather, we may yet take our place in folk memory as the Age of the Great Sacrilege, which was smitten from on high for its wanton ways. And children will cringe to hear how vile in the sight of God was our existence.

Currently, the most ecologically involved young people in our society appear to be learning more about their proper place in nature from American Indian lore, Zen, and Tantra than from Western science. Science seems at best able to furnish them with many microscopic details that assume meaning only when assimilated into a primordial wisdom. This is a startling fact of our time. Surely it is a strange kind of progress, then, which brings us to the point where, under pressure of dire emergency, urban-industrial society must look beyond its own science to such primitive and exotic traditions for a life-enhancing natural philosophy. □

THE DREAMER, THE DREAM

After the sleeper has burst his night pod
climbed up out of its silky holdings
the dream must stumble alone now
must mope in the hard eye of morning

in search of some phantom outcome
while on both sides of the tissue
the dreamer walks into the weather
past time in September woods in the rain

where the butternuts settle around him
louder than tears and in fact he comes
upon great clusters of honey mushrooms
breaking the heart of old oak

a hundred caps grotesquely piggyback
on one another, a caramel mountain
all powdered with their white spores
printing themselves in no notebook

and all this they do in secret
climbing behind his back
lumbering from their dark fissure
going up like a dream going on.

by Maxine Kumin

THE RENOIRS IN THE DELICATESSEN

And other notes from the diary of an art dealer

by Milton Esterow

AUGUST 12—The newspapers reported the other day that a tycoon had bought another masterpiece. The stories did not mention that he also collected mistresses. A few years ago, he gave one of his favorites—a striking brunette—a rent-free duplex that he furnished with, among other things, two small paintings by Renoir. Although the brunette might have made a fine Renoir model, she knew nothing about Impressionism. Nevertheless, she seemed to appreciate Renoir, for when the affair ended, she moved out of the apartment, taking the paintings with her. The tycoon never saw her again. One day, several years later, while he was strolling down Manhattan's Avenue of the Americas with his latest mistress, he stopped suddenly in front of a delicatessen. Hanging in the window, surrounded by salamis and large jars of half-sour pickles, were the two Renoirs. A collector, of course, would not be so indifferent as to leave them in the window. Was it possible that his ex-girlfriend had found it difficult to support herself, and not knowing the value of the Renoirs, had traded them for a week's supply of pastrami sandwiches? Incredible as it may seem, the tycoon continued strolling and never found out what happened to his paintings. Sometime later, when I checked the delicatessen window, there were no Renoirs. Only salamis and pickles.

AUGUST 17—Met Sam Salz, the art dealer, and Vladimir Horowitz on Fifth Avenue. Sam said that some years ago, Horowitz wanted to buy a Degas he had seen in Salz's home.

"How much do you want for it?" Horowitz asked.

"\$35,000," was the reply.

"I'll give you \$30,000," said Horowitz.

Salz insisted on \$35,000. But Horowitz refused to go higher. Neither man would budge. Finally, Salz asked the pianist, "Vladimir, how much do you get for a concert?"

Horowitz said his fee was \$5000.

"I'll make you an offer," Salz said, grinning. "If you give a concert here in my house, just for me, you can have the Degas at your price." A few days later, the deal was consummated. Horowitz played for about an hour and walked out with the Degas—for \$30,000.

SEPTEMBER 20—Mrs. Caroline Keck, a leading conservator, tells of a painting of a man with two children. After his wife died, he remarried. His second wife did not think the portrait was great art, and had some surgery done to it. She had the children of the first marriage painted over so that they disappeared. Years went by, and the second wife died. The painting went to the oldest son of the first marriage. The first thing the son did was to have himself and his younger sister restored. Somehow, the painting subsequently was turned over to a son of the second wife, who immediately obliterated the children



again. Not too long ago, a cleaning brought the original figures to the surface once again, but by now they were in such poor condition that they were painted over once more. Seldom, in the words of Mrs. Keck, has a painting become a battlefield for a family feud . . .

We bought a beautiful landscape today. The couple that had owned it were recently divorced. They couldn't split the picture so the court told them to sell it . . .

"I had this picture in the house three years before my wife let me hang it," a collector said to me.

SEPTEMBER 26—A friend of former President Johnson's talked about the controversial portrait of Johnson by Peter Hurd, over which the President supposedly exploded. "Lyndon didn't hate it that much. Earlier in the day he had got some discouraging reports on Vietnam. Then, just after he saw the portrait, his daughter told him about her engagement, so he wasn't in the right frame of mind. And when they opened the crate, they showed it under fluorescent light, so the lighting conditions weren't good."

SEPTEMBER 29—Abe, the dealer, on the phone: "I used to go to my folks' for dinner on Friday nights. My mother would say, 'Nu, what did you do today?' I told her I bought a pretty picture. My father came in. 'Nu, what did the big-shot picture dealer do today?' My mother said I had bought a picture for \$1650. My father raised his voice to say, '\$1650 for a picture?' He was just about to drink his chicken soup. He slammed the spoon. 'The boy's crazy,' he said.

"The following week I sold the picture to a lady. It was a wonderful portrait of two little girls. This lady's husband was dead, and she had no children. She saw the painting, and she practically started to cry. So we hang it, and she bought it for \$8500. That Friday I went to my folks'. My mother says, 'Nu, Abe, what did you do today?' I told her I sold the painting. She said, 'Poppa will be happy to hear it.' My Dad came in and he started drinking soup. 'Nu,' he says, 'what did you do with the picture you bought for \$1650?' My mother says, 'He sold it.' 'How much?' asks my father. Momma says \$8500. Poppa throws the spoon on the table. 'Eighty-five hundred dollars? He gave it away! Eighty-five hundred dollars for such a picture!' "

OCTOBER 10—Abe, the dealer, called and said, "You know that Renoir that Norton Simon bought last night for \$1,550,000 at the Parke-Bernet auction? I couldn't sell it for \$14,000 during the Depression."

Abe was talking about the California art collector and industrialist who has been called "the grand acquirer." Simon set a world auction record for an Impressionist painting when he bought the Renoir *Le Pont des Arts, Paris* by bidding by telephone from Los Angeles to Peter Wilson, the auctioneer, who has been called "the fastest gavel in the West."

"We were always on the road during the Depression," said Abe. "In those days, somebody had to be on the road to sell. We had to call on people who had money. I had an office in St. Louis, and I made an appointment with this dame who lived about ninety miles away. It was five below zero and snowing, so I stopped in a luncheonette for coffee and grabbed some lox and a few bagels, and I put them in a bag on the front seat of my car. The Renoir was all wrapped up in the back.

"I get to this town and I stop in a gas station. I say to the attendant, 'Can you help me? I want to show some lady a picture.' So he comes with me, and we get to the house. The maid comes to the door. 'I'll call the missus,' she says. The dame comes to the door. Remember, it's five below zero, it's freezing and snowing. 'Hold it up and show it to me on the porch,' she says. She's standing in the house and looking through the door and we're out on the porch. We're holding it for about five minutes, and now my fingers are numb.

"I don't like it,' she says. 'There are too many people in it, there's too much going on in the picture.' She turns and walks away. So we take the Renoir away and go back to the car, and I'm thinking, 'Well, at least I've got my bagels and lox.' "

Sam Salz, the dealer in Impressionists and Post-Impressionists, also was at the auction.

"I bought Monet's *La Route à Vétheuil* from Monet's son in 1952 and sold it for \$7000," Salz said. (It brought \$180,000 last night.) "During the Second World War, I was offering Monet's *Louveciennes—Effet de Neige* for \$4500." (It brought \$250,000.) "I sold Pissarro's *Jardin des Tuileries, Matinée de Printemps* for \$7500 over twenty years ago, and they sold it at the auction for \$260,000."

Salz joined in the bidding for a Rose-period Picasso. "I was laughing at myself as I was bidding," said Salz. "Here was a picture I bought from Picasso. I sold it in 1953 for \$25,000. So here I am at the auction and I was up to \$300,000, and then I said to myself, 'The hell with it,' and I stopped."

The Picasso finally went for \$430,000 to an unidentified Swiss buyer.

It was Salz who said, "Pictures didn't become expensive. Money became cheap. It's not the pictures that aren't worth the money. It's the money that isn't worth the money anymore."

OCTOBER 11—Still more on Renoir's *Le Pont des Arts*: The rumor along Madison Avenue is that the underbidder on the painting was Aristotle Onassis, who wanted to buy the Renoir for Jacqueline Onassis. Onassis, according to the rumor, had left instructions with Parke-Bernet that he would go as high as \$1,500,000, believing that this would be more than enough to guarantee the purchase, since the betting was that the painting would bring around \$1 million. What would have happened if Onassis was actually at the auction to bid against Norton Simon?



NOVEMBER 26—Trip to the Columbus (Ohio) Gallery of Fine Arts. On exhibition is the collection of Dr. E. T. Hanley of Pennsylvania. (He died recently.) Hanley is married to an ex-belly dancer, much younger than he is. The exhibition opened with a gala dinner at the museum. Staid, sedate Columbus Establishment attended. Mrs. Hanley celebrated by stripping down to her former working clothes and went into her act in an area bounded by surprised faces, Matisse, Pissarro, Gilbert Stuart, and a G-string.

Mrs. Hanley's name is Tullah. Tullah had pasted little typewritten notes next to every painting in the show. On a bulletin board in the lobby she put together some photos of the paintings as they hang in her home. She wrote: "How do we hang them in our home? All over the place. We have a fourteen-room (small rooms) farmhouse, no wall space left at all. We put sculptors on the floors, etc., and pictures on doors and windows and door casings. Ed Hanley has been collecting art for fifty years. We collected together for twenty years. We both are addicts. We are art junkies and won't kick the habit. This card and information by Tullah Hanley."

Under one painting, Tullah wrote: "It takes rich millionaires to buy famous art today, not poor millionaires. Rich millionaires are the ones who have liquid cash. Poor millionaires haven't got much available money. They only have assets and credit."

JANUARY 6—I finally met Elke Hofman today, working in a bookstore on Fifth Avenue. Elke's story can match anything on the bookshelves.

The story starts in December, 1959, when a small

painting by Paul Klee was stolen from the art gallery at the University of California at Los Angeles. Walter Maitland, a West Coast collector, had lent it to the gallery. There were no clues, the insurance money was paid, and the matter was dropped by the police.

Sixteen months later, a series of events began that led to the return of the painting. What initiated it was a visit by Richard Feigen, a New York art dealer, to the home of Maitland in Colorado. In a catalogue of the Maitland Collection, Feigen came upon a listing of the Klee but could not find it hanging in the house.

"Walter, where is the Klee now?" he asked.

"Oh, that was stolen quite a while ago," Maitland said.

"Stolen? What was done to recover it?"

"I don't think anything much was done. But we got our insurance money."

"How much?"

"\$1000."

"Walter, this is a valuable painting. Do you have a photo of it?"

Maitland found one. Feigen sent copies of it to ten international art magazines, with a notice that it had been stolen.

Before any were published, the Klee was admired by thousands of West Berlin art lovers. The painting had been acquired by the Berlin-Dahlem Museum. For nearly a year, it was on display there.

Then, one day in March, 1962, Professor Leopold Reidemeister, general director of the Berlin-Dahlem, picked up a copy of the latest issue of the *Burlington* magazine, one of the world's leading art periodicals. On page 90 was a photo of the Klee, with Feigen's notice. Reidemeister was shocked. He had purchased the Klee in Munich from Gunther Franke, one of Germany's most respected dealers. Reidemeister immediately telephoned to Franke to ask from whom the dealer had obtained it. Within hours, Franke wired Feigen that he acquired the Klee from a young man named Roger Caswell. Feigen called the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Several days later two FBI agents—one of them was Dan Head, who was in charge of tracking down art thieves—arrested Caswell in his apartment on New York's East Side.

Caswell told Head that he had majored in art history at UCLA, that he had taken the painting to his room in California, and subsequently flew to Munich.

In November, 1960, Caswell, carrying the painting wrapped in brown paper, went to the gallery of Gunther Franke, whom he had met on a previous trip and from whom he had purchased some prints. Elke Hofman, Franke's secretary, who spoke English fluently, remembered him from his earlier visit and greeted him. She led him into Franke's office and acted as interpreter, since Caswell spoke no German and Franke spoke no English.

Caswell unwrapped the painting and said he

great length Marion came out to join us from the kitchen, saying she had just put the roast in the oven. Harry responded with such force that Jean and Anne and I fell silent and rather looked away. *"Just put the roast in the oven! My God, Marion! Why didn't you put it in when we first came home?"* It was wrong of him to shout like that, with guests around, but I must say I shared his sentiments.

"You were all drinking and having a good time. I didn't think there was any hurry," Marion said simply.

Bankers are not so unfeeling as they are supposed to be. Nobody is as unfeeling as bankers are supposed to be. I saw, and I understood, that Marion looked cruelly used because she wished to be. Quite contrary to my conscious desires, my mind began working on getting away from there with grace—going to bed early, leaving before everybody was up. Tiger came out of the house, newly showered, in a fresh shirt and slacks. "Something smells good in there, Marion," he said. "When do we eat?"

"You smell a roast," Harry said, "and with luck we'll eat it Tuesday-week." He stood and rooted around in his pocket and produced considerable cash. "Come on, you guys, we'll get some pizza." When I saw his money, I decided there were a lot of people at Myopia Harry didn't want to see. It has been my experience, in banking, that a builder can get deeper into debt than a gambler.

Marion sat studying the table. I got up to go with the other men. I asked Anne if she would like to come along for the ride, because I enjoy her company, but she said she would stay and help Marion. On the way to the pizza place, Harry said, "I'm sorry about this little flare-up, but it happens all the time. I get to drinking with friends, and then there's nothing to eat and I go right down the chute, and Marion points and says, Pity me! Pity me! I'm married to a drunk!"

"Aunt Marion is punishing you for having friends," Tiger said blandly, as though he had thought that out long ago. "She doesn't have any."

"Just try to ignore her," Harry said. "The pizza will hold me together." Then unaccountably, and in retrospect rudely, they started speaking French. I lack the language gift, although I am gifted with figures; I did complete my language requirement at Harvard with third-year French, but I could understand only a word here and there. What they spoke was a vintage GI patois that would have been equally meaningless to André Malraux as it was to me. In addition, Harry and Jack were so close, and communicated so entirely, that I believe if one of them caught on fire, the other could read the smoke. They descended more deeply into their patois, and I simply smiled bravely through, knowing they would not be making fun of me.

We bought several huge pizzas—Harry insisted on paying and I let him—and took them home and everybody fell to hungrily, everybody but Marion, who

was officially cross. I felt doubly sorry for her because the unhappy situation was of her own making, which left her no recourse but to sulk in public. I felt also twinges of real regret at not having gone to Myopia, especially now that I had decided Harry's debt was the reason for all of us not going.

As dark came, about nine, Harry brought from the garage two ten-speed bikes. He and I and Tiger took turns riding them in the driveway, remastering bicycle riding, and learning to work the shifts. Then Jack suggested we all take turns riding around the neighborhood, two at a time, and I sensed we were entering into the adversary proceeding again, and that there would be races, and somebody would be hurt on the unfamiliar bikes in the coming dark. I saw no reason why the somebody should be me. They rode off, weaving and shouting in French, and now a patois German. I went back and talked with Anne, and Tiger's wife, Jean, and with Marion. I didn't feel the least unmasculine not joining my friends in their insanity, but only prudent. Good sense is prized in bankers, and that is what I do.

Not ten minutes later, Harry raced up the driveway, with Tiger well behind him, pumping madly. "I beat him!" Harry called, waving one hand high. "I whipped him good!" The front wheel of his bike abruptly turned a right angle, and he pitched forward on his face on the tarmac. Harry fell very heavily, his head landing with the sound a mallet makes on a new pumpkin. He rolled over so slowly to his back, his glasses broken and the right lens shattered. Tiger got to him first and knelt, and I knelt next to him. Harry stirred and looked up. "Jimmy," he said, pleasantly surprised, "where the hell did you come from?" Then he groaned deeply, possibly in pain, but I think more in recognition of his situation and condition. We got him to his feet, Tiger and I, and helped him through murmuring women to the table. I went to get ice but found there was none, all the trays newly filled with water, but I found in the freezer a pork chop or perhaps a small steak wrapped in aluminum foil and frozen hard as any cube. I wrapped that in a wet hand towel and took it out to Harry.

Tiger Jack had mopped the eye clear of blood and was examining it. He laughed in cadence. "Ha/ha/ha. You're going to need a couple-three stitches in there, Punjab."

Harry thanked me for the towel and pressed it to his eye. "Oh, put a Band-Aid on it, and let's have some dinner," he said.

"Dinner isn't ready yet," Marion said. Harry groaned.

"Trust me," Tiger said. "Get your head on straight and we'll go to the hospital."

"If you say so, Tiger," Harry said. He stood up and tried his legs. "What the hell did I hit?"

reunion. It was fifty dollars the couple, which meant a hundred and fifty dollars for all of us, and Harry, whom I suspected then had gone broke renting the handsome house, wanted to put the money into liquor and food and have our own small reunion. Tiger agreed, but I don't think it was due to money. He has residual and royalty income, which is recession-resistant. Tiger had been a boxer in school, and had rowed single sculls and played the piano for hours every day in the soundproof rehearsal room. He was and is a loner, and I think he didn't want to go to Myopia because he wouldn't know anybody. "You guys are all the reunion I want," Tiger said. "I can't think of anybody else I want to see." I wanted to go to Myopia, but I wanted more to be with my friends, particularly in the pleasant glow of camaraderie then, and I acceded.

Personally I dread mornings in someone else's home. You never know where the bathroom is, and when you find it, you never know if there's somebody in there. But Harry's kids and Tiger's son were sleeping in the camper in the drive, and the house was large, with plenty of baths, and I was quite at ease. We had a small breakfast, just juice and English muffins and coffee, and went, in two cars, to a very handsome small beach. Tiger immediately started jogging. The sky was high and clear and the sun hot, although it was just early June. The rest of us walked the beach and talked, the girls carefully, as the wives of close friends do. Tiger came back from his run panting and wiping his whippet chest with his shirt. I decided, Oh, well, and took off my shirt and sunned myself, although my chest has never been an aesthetic consideration. Then we drove back to the house and had an enormous brunch—bloody marys and eggs and fried tomatoes and bacon and leftover steak. Through all the morning I looked for an opportunity to get Harry aside, unobtrusively, to offer to pay the fifty dollars for him and his wife, and to offer to loan him a larger sum if he were really strapped. Unfortunately, no opportunity presented itself. I say unfortunately because Harry had been a football player and would know many people at the reunion, and almost everybody would recognize him, if only from his size. After the big brunch, however, there was no sense in going to Myopia for lunch, and with greatest reluctance, I let the project slip from hand. I suggested to Jack—he was easy to take aside unobtrusively—that we get some liquor. He drove us in his old white convertible to a package store, where we had difficulty spending sixty dollars. Tiger insisted we share, and I agreed. When we returned with a split case of gin, scotch, brandy, and vermouth, Harry protested that there was enough in the house for all of us for the weekend, but I could see he was pleased with the alcoholic plenty.

In the afternoon we went boating on a river in a huge flat-bottomed skiff Harry had chained to a dock

in the woods. We drove to the dock in the camper, the children inside it, and one car following. We got into the skiff, except for the children, who busied themselves on shore. Tiger rowed upstream, and Harry made gin and tonics from a great plastic ice bucket he had taken aboard. We all talked a great deal except for Tiger's wife, Jean, a small, pretty girl, and blond, who still missed being attractive. When she spoke, it was as though she needed practice, as though there were little talk in her life. Tiger spoke more than she, and he was rowing. Later, at the dock again, we all got into the car and left the children with the camper in the woods. "Will you be coming back for them?" I asked Harry.

"In the morning," Harry said.

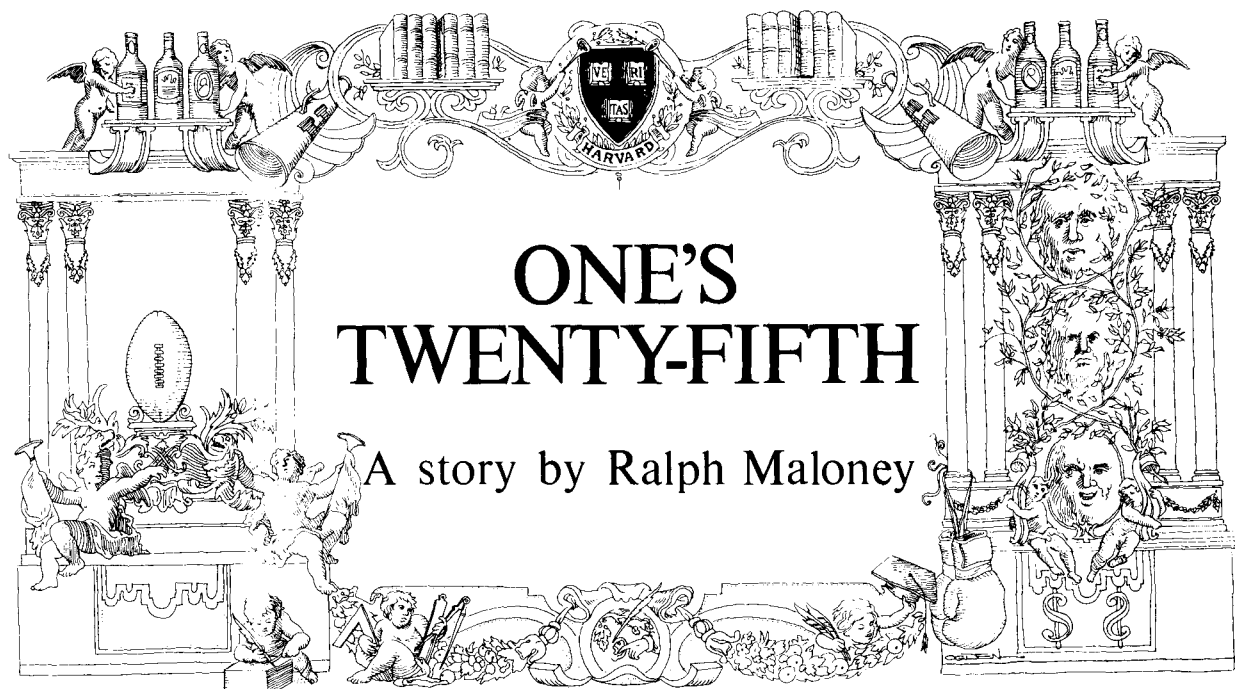
I was shocked. "They're much too young!" I said. Anne, my wife, put her hand on my arm to quiet me.

"They camp here all the time, my kids do," Harry said. "They'll be all right."

I looked around for somebody to share my outrage. Only Jean seemed disturbed to leave her son out in the woods overnight, but she said nothing. I expect there had been an argument about it, and she, lacking verbal skills or determination, had lost it.

We got back to the handsome white house about six, at which magic hour my former roommates switched from gin and tonics to martinis. Anne and I stayed on tonic, as did Harry's wife, Marion. I had known Marion since she was at Radcliffe. She is a dark girl, and tall, and has a quality (which I remember she had long ago, before she and Harry were "making it," and Tiger and I had to get out of our rooms afternoons), a quality of having been sexually cruelly used. Something about her eyes and mouth, then and now, suggested she had recently been ravaged. It is an enormously attractive quality, and I have long thought it was what we all found so appealing, or sexy if you will, in Marilyn Monroe. Marion kept an eye on Harry, counting his drinks. In and out of the kitchen, presumably preparing dinner, she watched Harry in such a way that one *noticed* she was counting his drinks. Harry paid no heed, and drank up. We all played some polite badminton, doubles, on the lovely lawn. Tiger and Harry had a challenge match, which Tiger won—I believe because it was a straight adversary proceeding, like boxing or rowing, and if it had been a team effort, say volleyball, since the nets are similar, Harry's team would have won. Tiger announced he was going in to shower, which certainly nobody discouraged at this point.

We sat at the outdoor table, having cocktails. Harry and I talked and talked. I was glad my children were at home. The many differences between Harry and me would have found focus in the children, and camping overnight. I would simply not have permitted it for my kids, and communications would have suffered, and the camaraderie would have been impaired. As it was, we talked endlessly of cities and people, Harry getting frankly drunk. At



I prefer to be called James, and I can be quite stuffy about it, so only two people call me Jim now, Harry and Tiger Jack. They were my roommates at Harvard, and I can't say I object to their calling me Jim, because when they say James it sounds alien, even comic. We were very different types as roommates, which is probably why we got along well for four years, and time has served to accentuate the differences between us. We have all of us done fairly well financially, although their work is recession-prone and they seem a bit broke. Harry has built a tremendous amount of housing, and Tiger went straight from college to the NBC studio orchestra. I went into banking and had little for a long time, but now the time and effort are beginning to pay off. My work is not vulnerable to recession, and I suspect that despite what most might have predicted when we graduated, I am doing better now than either of my friends, and perhaps better than both together. I must confess that, completely without malice, I take a certain pleasure in that.

The twentieth reunion of the class of '52 was to consist principally of a daylong gathering at the Myopia Hunt Club in Hamilton, Massachusetts. There were to be seminars, and lunch, followed by golf and swimming, then a cash bar and dinner. I was frankly eager to go, because I had never seen the Myopia Club, and I like that sort of thing. I have said I can be stuffy, so I might as well say I'm also a bit of a snob, but I'm honest about it, which rather removes the sting. We gathered—Harry, Jack, and I, with our wives and three of their children—late on Friday in an enormous white house in Hamilton that

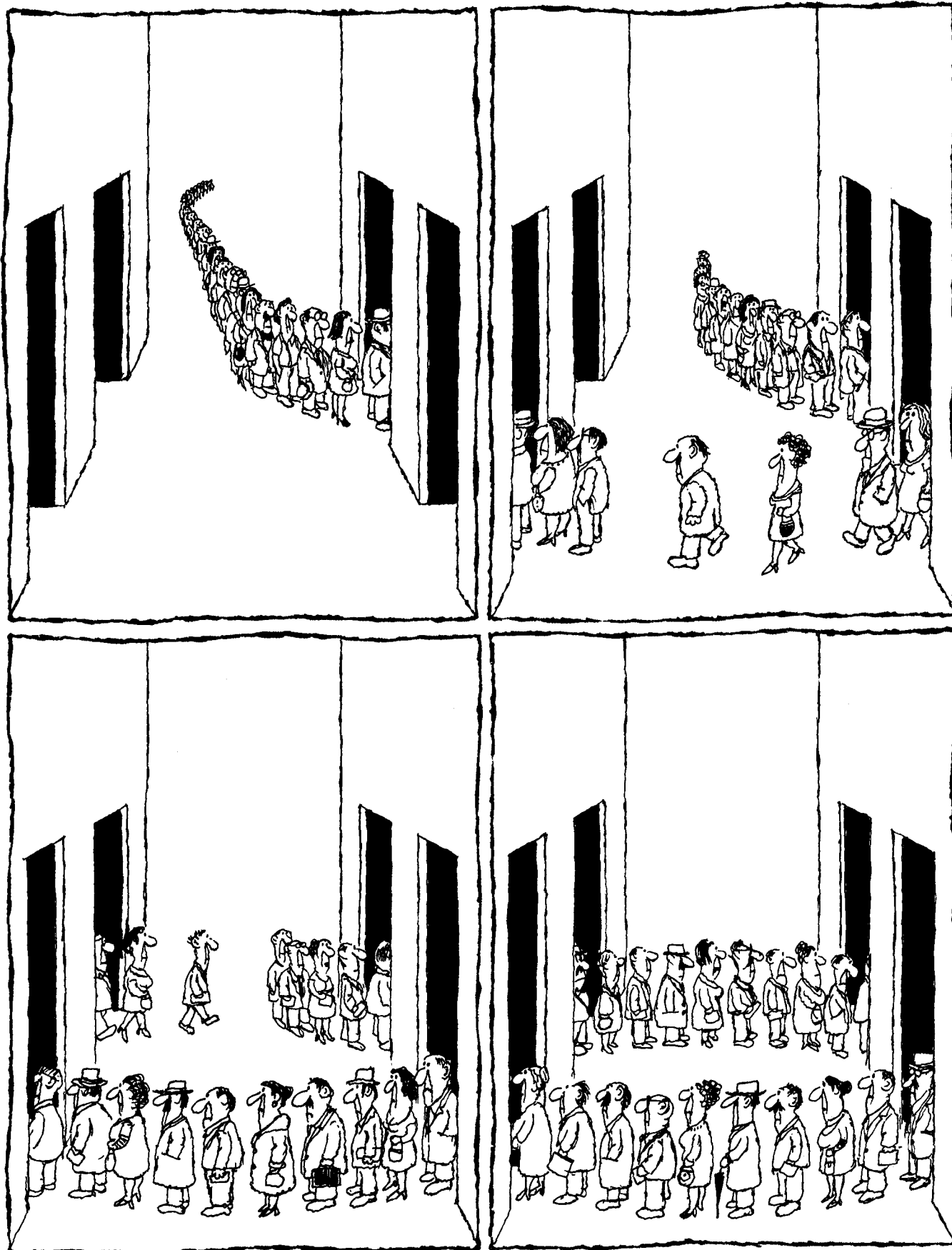
Harry had rented for the summer. Harry's children, a girl nine and a boy eleven, both very tall, and Tiger's son, older but smaller, were fed early, and occupied themselves bringing sleeping bags and flashlights to a camper parked in the drive, preparing to camp out. (My children were at home in New York with Mrs. Guardini, who sleeps in.)

There was a tremendous amount to drink, as there always is where Jack and Harry are, and I drank my share, although I'm ordinarily careful about liquor. I don't want to be the first vice president of Bankers Trust to develop forger's tremor. We grilled steaks in the really impressive backyard, and ate at a wooden table out of doors, the six of us. When it grew cool, we went inside and drank stingers or scotches and talked. We talked almost through the night after the girls had gone to bed. I found myself quite moved—the whiskey helped, of course—by the camaraderie, and by my roommates' unquestionably sincere concern for what I was doing and where I was going and how my children were making out. I also found myself inquiring, with the urgency one saves for immediate family, about their work and their families. It was a very warm evening, in the emotional sense, and I was, as I say, moved, and moved pleasurably. At length, Harry started forgetting who I was. He had his glasses off and is virtually blind without them, and also I had heard rumors of his being in AA's and certain specific hospitals. Tiger reminded him gently, frequently, who I was, but then Harry forgot who Tiger was, and we all went to bed.

One disappointment in the evening was that Harry and Tiger agreed not to go to Myopia for the formal

THE LAST LAUGH

by Fernando Krahn



Age, vb.: to grow older: become old: show the effects of or undergo change with the passage of time ("His mind did not age." R.W. Firth)

little she inherited from her family, and the benevolence of the Social Security Act, with amendments, would guarantee humane treatment in her old age. "You get what you pay for," she told me, "and I want a nurse here, at least during the day, until I'm strong enough to manage on my own. I don't want to depend on those"—with a scornful jerk of her head—"people for anything. I'll pay for your services, but I'm asking as a friend. Don't leave me alone with them. They just want to keep everyone in the parking lot until it's over."

I didn't want to leave her alone, and certainly understood her fears. The place was driving me crazy. I would catch myself sitting and staring at the wall with a vacant smile, my hands folded in my lap, just like one of the old people in the parking lot. I found myself ignoring the calls for the help that came from rooms other than Miss Larson's because the aides had become so hostile to my "interference." The charge nurse gave me daily lectures on my letting Miss Larson become too dependent, how bad it was for her to get everything she wanted, how demanding she was to the other nurses, poor things.

She was my friend and I wanted her well, healthy, back at the bridge table. But I couldn't stay with her forever. I became impatient, even angry, sometimes rough. I could feel a great distance between us—I was young, she was old—that had never existed on the outside. The hostility of them, the others, those people who worked in the hospital, was beginning to permeate the relationship we had. I began really to dislike Miss Larson. And we had been friends.

Miss Larson understood the stakes long before I did. It was a battle for her soul, a fight for her mind, with her weakened physical condition the trump card. Either she could give up, and wheel into the parking lot, or she could keep fighting and have everybody hate her, receive extra sedation to keep her mouth shut, be placed on mind-fogging tranquilizers to stop her demands.

In late October Miss Larson and I reached an uneasy agreement; I would stay a few more days, then come back only for a few hours in the morning to help her bathe and dress. I explained to her that I was interested in seeing other places where old people lived and had accepted a temporary job as a visiting nurse in order to do some quiet investigation. She glanced at me sharply, snorted unbelievably, and turned off her hearing aid. I left the room.

It was Halloween. As I hurried down the hall to the dining room, I could hear Miss Smiles tittering away, pretending joy, fulfilling Montcliffe's promise for a balanced and interesting program of activities geared to the interest and rehabilitation of the old people in their care. The afternoon's activity was to be a party. "I ought to make the old lady go," I thought. "A Halloween party would really set her

off!" The cook had prepared cupcakes decorated with tiny candy pumpkins, and apple cider in juice glasses. Miss Smiles, in her untidy blue smock, had been racing around all morning, trailing black and orange streamers. Every patient, with the exception of an old man who said he was dying that day, was wheeled or pushed into the parking lot to attend the party.

Halloween. Hallowed Eve, the day before All Saints Day, the day that unfulfilled souls walk the earth and demand satisfaction. The door to the parking lot was filled with flickering light; they must have candles, I thought. I stopped outside the door and glanced in.

Smiles had outdone herself. Thirty-four old men and women sat lined up in the semidarkness, unmoving and quiet. One would give a phlegmy cough, another would clear her throat; hands picked at blankets or grasped the arms of the chairs tightly to prevent the tremors. The room was decorated as for a first-grader's dreams of Halloween; all orange and black and skeletons dangling from the ceiling. Plastic pumpkins held flickering candles. No games were being played, no one spoke or moved, except Miss Smiles, who was fluttering about, "Oh, what fun, what fun! Are you excited, darling? Isn't this just lovely? We really must have parties more often!"

I watched her move about, stopping before each one of the old people and moving her hands about their faces as if to evoke a spell, a running stream of words following her around the room. I had thought her an incredibly stupid woman, unimaginative and insensitive, but from the doorway, on this day, in her dark dress, she looked somehow sinister and evil. Suddenly she stopped her fluttery movements and stepped back, brushing her hands together briskly as if she had completed a hard and dusty task. "There!" she said. "Finished. Isn't it wonderful?" And she turned toward me, and flicked on the light.

Then I could see what she had been doing. The faces of the old people were covered with masks, with crudely drawn skulls, garish pumpkins, little elves, evil witches. The old gray heads halved by elastic turned toward the door slowly as if all the masks were attached to one string and Miss Smiles had pulled them in my direction. There they were, drooling, twitching; some able to think coherently, some senile; women, men; private and charity cases; all distinctions gone, they joined the living dead. Witches, goblins, ghosts, skeletons, twisted bodies topped by a child's nightmare of faces.

I backed out of the room, fleeing from some vision of my own future, locked in a world like this, forced to attend meaningless functions, eat tasteless food, live friendless, penniless, sour, and old. Was that the future? "No," I thought. "No, I don't want to get old." □

*Act one's age or be one's age: to behave in a
reasonable manner.*

seems endemic in places where the aged live. The custodians, whether medically trained or administrative, always seem to have some anger, some residual hatred or fear of their charges. Sometimes I felt it was fear of one's own aging process, or just anger at having to do a very difficult job. Sometimes I saw it as a sort of natural turning away from another's misery, the way one will ignore the open trousers of an old man on the subway. But even if it was a sense of delicacy, of not wanting to intrude on the last years these old people had on earth, it soon progressed to another level. Because the attendants had physically to care for, handle the aging bodies of these old people, they began to treat them as if they were infants, unhearing, uncaring, unable to speak or communicate in any way. The patients were uniformly called honey or dearie or sweetie—or sometimes naughty girl if they soiled their beds—just as one tends to call children by pet names. The attendants expected gratitude or at least silent acquiescence from the old people and their families. The bodies were kept clean, fed, powdered, combed, and clothed, but they were like infants, without modesty or sex or privacy.

At times the patients were even treated as inanimate objects rather than as human beings, adult or infant. This attitude was most frequent in older staff members, and it is understandably defensive. "Ahhh, she's *just* an old lady," they would say. "She's *just* an old lady." And that seemed to justify all manner of things, including the way blind patients were fed or not fed, according to whim; or how soon an old man was cleaned and his linen changed after he soiled his bed. And Montcliffe Convalescent Hospital is a *good* hospital.

Besides the nursing-care program (baths twice a week, enemas when required, tranquilizers and sleeping pills as directed, part of each day spent out of bed, and so forth), Montcliffe also boasted a part-time recreation therapist. She hadn't been trained for her job, but she had the right disposition and character for it. Nothing depressed her, and she seemed oblivious to the depression around her. Surrounded by "her girls," who were all nodding and fidgeting in wheelchairs and who had not uttered a sound, she would chirp, "Oh, this is such fun, isn't it, girls? We must do this [watch television, play bingo, clap hands, whatever] more often!"

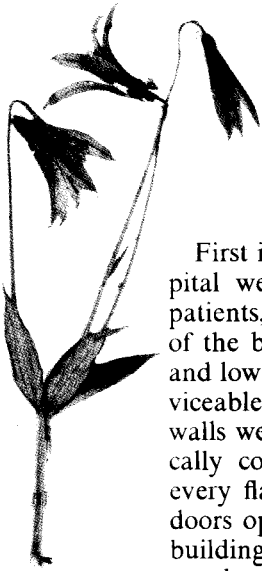
The programs took place in what Miss Larson and I began calling "the parking lot." This was a large room, beige brightened by a touch of orange, designated the recreation room by Miss Smiles. Most of the day it was filled with old people, who had either been pushed in in wheelchairs and left to doze in long lines against the wall, or had tottered in, pulled

by the hand of an impatient aide, and were seated in low, plastic chairs, expressly designed for the discomfort of old bones. Miss Larson refused to patronize the "parking lot"; she said the sight of that many old bodies lined up waiting for the undertaker depressed her. No conversation between patients ever took place in the parking lot. The only people who spoke were those whose job it was to entertain. When no program was scheduled, a large color television set was turned on. The patients were not to touch the set, and it was frequently out of focus.

Miss Larson entered Montcliffe the last week in October. The air was cool and fresh and in the sun it was quite warm, so we spent a good part of our day outside. I was becoming increasingly impatient with her; her condition was deteriorating in spite of my efforts. No matter what I did she simply refused to get better. I blamed her for imposing her weakness on me; but whenever she became too demanding, I would just walk away and have a cigarette in the dining room. Shortly after her admission, I arrived one morning at 7 A.M. to find the night nurse indignant and angry. Miss Larson had climbed over the side rails during the night, and had been found in the bathroom. "She didn't ring or call out," said the nurse, "her room is right opposite the desk, and I would have heard her. Why, she might have been hurt, and she is so confused. I want the doctor to order more sedation. We can't have her carrying on and disturbing all the other patients. Finally, we had to put her in restraints and I repeated her sleeping pill. But she kept yelling all the same."

I walked in the room and Miss Larson was indeed in restraints; the look on her face was so angry, it seemed to me someone had tied her up in order to prevent murder. "Get me out of these!" she ordered. "How dare they try and stop me from getting out of bed. I always have to relieve myself at night; and they never answer my bell. Usually they come and hide the cord so I can't even find it. So I crawl over the edge; I've been doing it ever since I came to this place. Now, you get me out of these, and tell that doctor I want to see him!"

Miss Larson was not confused; but in a place where all the patients are so sedated that they scarcely move a muscle during the night, she was counted a nuisance. I didn't want them to increase her sedation; barbiturates frequently make old people confused and disoriented. Even if she was a pain in the neck, I liked her better awake and making some sense. The problem was she had no rights. She was old, sick, feeble. Therefore she must shut up, lie still, take what little was offered, and be grateful. And if she did that, she would be a "good girl." There she was, ninety-six years old and didn't even know she was dependent on society. She thought her thirty years of teaching, her careful hoarding of the



First impressions of Montcliff Convalescent Hospital were favorable. It was small, just thirty-six patients, and fairly new. The design and decoration of the building was modern California motel; long and low, with large expanses of glass covered by serviceable beige drapes. Every floor was carpeted, and walls were newly painted beige. Large and fantastically colored sprays of plastic flowers dominated every flat surface and each room had sliding glass doors opening onto a narrow walk surrounding the building. The place was unimaginative, impersonal, tasteless, but not really objectionable. It was simply ugly.

Miss Larson and I were directed to a four-bed room; no, they didn't have space available in a two-bed room; yes, they knew it was requested and as soon as space was available . . . please just fill out these forms.

The woman in charge of the Montcliff Convalescent Hospital was a registered nurse. She was required by law, a fixture like fire doors or ramps; new to her job, frightened of old people, she had a tendency to avoid looking you in the eye. She bustled, chirped, patted, pulled, and quickly disappeared. All of the actual patient care was done by the "aides" or "attendants." They are not trained to do their jobs, and they learn by watching other attendants. Their skill and interest depend a good deal on whom they work with the first days. Some are good, some terrible. All are underpaid. It's a job for the unskilled, for women with children to support and no hope in their future; for women whose legs are already swollen and tired from thankless day labor in a million other jobs like this one; they must work, and it's a job.

Three of the beds in the room were occupied, two by silent unmoving figures, looking as if a child had placed pillows under the sheets to fool his parents, and the bed nearest Miss Larson's (I already thought of it as "her" spot as she sat in the wheelchair, head down, hearing aid off, hands moving restlessly in her lap) was completely filled by an extremely obese—grayly fat, no pink skin, just mounds of bulging, unfeeling flesh—woman, who moved her lips constantly, pulling them in and out like a baby waiting to be fed.

It was nearly four o'clock, time for me to be leaving. I wanted out of that place very badly. It was all so clean, so neat, but underneath it felt just like the "Old Folk's Home" I had known. The smell, the ambience were alike, but the surface was different. We have certainly improved care of the aged in all those highly visible ways like clean linen, modern buildings, professional staff, even fire regulations. The package has been sanitized, wrapped in plastic, and labeled fit for public funding. But it feels the same as it did before modernization set in.

I didn't want to leave Miss Larson. However, I

smiled a very professional nursy smile, efficiently tucked her into bed without letting myself feel compassion, and thought that the doctor *must* know best; after all, he is the doctor. I refused to meet Miss Larson's miserable, half-uttered pleas that I not leave her alone. I went home, and by morning had convinced myself that the place wasn't so bad, that I was simply against institutions without really giving any particular place a chance to be different, and resolved that I would do my best to make Miss Larson's stay comfortable, easy, and as short as possible.

That first morning began with a lecture by the charge nurse. I must help Miss Larson adjust to being in Montcliff . . . As the charge nurse talked, I could see the aides pushing patients in wheelchairs out of their rooms and into the hall. Under thin cotton bath blankets, the old people were naked. Some were confused, pulling the cloth off their wrinkled flesh, mouths and hands constantly working, sometimes uttering small wordless cries. Others sat miserably hunched in their chairs and held the thin blankets tightly around bent shoulders. Someone had pulled Miss Larson out of bed, and she was sitting in the line, looking around wildly, her neck rigid with indignation. "No, no, I have a nurse. No, no . . ." I could hear her protest. "No, no, I can bathe myself, just let me alone, I can do it." Some of the other patients were looking at her, without interest and without pity. We all have to do it, they seemed to be saying. Don't fight it. No distinctions. What makes you think you're so different? Men, women, confused, coherent, all the same. To the showers!

Two aides, one on each side, would pick up the old carcass, place it in a molded plastic shower chair, deftly remove the blanket, push the person under the shower and rather haphazardly soap her down. A few minutes for rinsing, a quick rubdown with an already damp towel, back under the blanket and ready for the next. The aides were quick, efficient, not at all brutal; they kept up a running conversation between themselves about food prices, the new shoes they had bought, California divorce laws. They might have been two sisters doing dishes. Lift, scrub, rinse, dry, put away. Lift, scrub, rinse, dry, put away. And did you hear the one about . . .

I gave Miss Larson a bath in her room that morning, over the strenuous objections of the charge nurse, who felt I was encouraging separation and dependence. I felt guilty, and my hands were unnecessarily rough as I turned and bathed Miss Larson. It was as if I blamed her for placing me in a position where I had to be miserable, observe misery. How could she do it to me?

The resentment I felt so strongly that first morning

*The period equal to the average span of human life:
generation ("Actions of the last age are like almanacs
of the last year." John Denham)*

morning. "I think someone gave me some drug. At night, when the hospital is sound asleep, I wake and the room is filled with colors, with dimly remembered faces, with funny music. Sometimes I will find myself talking quite lucidly to someone who just isn't there, someone who died a long time ago. I feel one moment like I am five years old, and my father is holding me on his lap; or I am on a train and have cinders in my eyes. Last night I taught my first class all over again—and, oh, I didn't want to do it then or now. I argued with my father about going to graduate school. 'I must,' I told him. 'I can be a really great mathematician.' But as I was talking to him, his face became a rainbow and slid off down the wall and he disappeared. The nurses came in . . . if they've given me some drug, for experiments, they should tell me. It isn't fair, I shouldn't have to relive all that again. If every night for the rest of my life is going to be this way; if all my dreams are going to be distortions of the past, with time and color and everything all running together, I would just as soon die now. I can't do it all again, I can't be that strong all over again, not now. Not after all these years."

During the day she was fine, if tired and dozing most of the time. But when darkness came she entered a shadowy world, a world seen only by her. In hospitals they call it "sundowning" and it is a common thing with old people when they are removed from a familiar environment and placed in the hospital. The darkness, the lack of familiar things around them, the strange sounds from the corridors cause a sort of sensory confusion which brings on hallucinations. Usually the simple act of turning on a night-light will chase away the shadows, and the old people will sleep. But in Miss Larson's case, a light was not enough. For ten days her nights were filled with horrors, and her days spent in exhausted, fitful dozing. She seemed well on her way to becoming a senile old lady.

But gradually the lucid moments became more frequent, and she began to beg to be taken home. The hospital was a malignant presence to her, a place filled with ghosts and sudden, unexplained noises in the night. She was coherent but unreasonable in her demands. She could not walk, could barely stand without help. She continued to be suspicious of all nurses, but she had always been suspicious. She was extremely demanding, even more so after she discovered the private-duty nurses received \$40 a shift. She expected to receive her money's worth. The night nurse quit after Miss Larson caught her dozing in a chair and threw a pitcher of water in that general direction.

The next morning her doctor announced that, owing to her slow recovery and the general overcrowding in the hospital, she must consider moving to a convalescent hospital. Since she lived alone, she

must be physically able to care for herself before discharge. Meals and maid service were available in the residence club, but no personal care. Now Miss Larson became really upset. She had friends who had simply disappeared in such places; she believed people went there when there was no chance for recovery. "Death houses for the old," I heard her mutter. "I'll go to the street first." But it wasn't as if she really had a choice. The hospital needed her bed for acutely ill patients, and other facilities were available for long-term care.

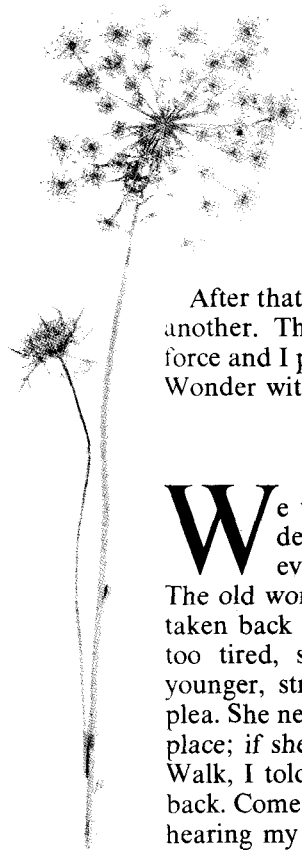
The doctor informed the nursing staff and the hospital social worker that Miss Larson was to be transferred to an "extended-care facility." He recommended several places in the vicinity, and the social worker came to talk to her.

"Social Worker." A strange title and an even stranger woman. Her job at this particular hospital consisted in finding places to send people who were no longer in need of intensive nursing care, who could not be helped by all the technology gathered in a modern hospital, who were, in short, no longer medically interesting or likely to improve drastically. The job was more like that of a travel agent, and Miss Larson was convinced that this woman was selling only one-way tickets.

"You're very lucky, Emily, my, you don't look ninety-six years old, we've found a perfectly lovely place just down the block from here, a new place run by perfectly lovely competent people recommended by your doctor. Everything will be taken care of before you leave here; I just need a few answers to some simple questions and you can be moved immediately, and doctor says you are to have nurse with you for a few days until you get used to the change. . . . Now, Emily, if you will just tell me your social security number . . . Is she listening to me?"

"I think she turned off her hearing aid when you called her by her first name. She regards that as impertinent; she doesn't want to go to this place, and I don't blame her for being uncooperative," I answered. "If you need any information, it should be on her admission forms here. I think Miss Larson understands that she is being moved on orders from her doctor, and there isn't much we can do. But she doesn't feel any need to be polite."

"Doctor says . . ." The woman was only doing her job. I didn't want to be rude, but she showed no understanding of the crushing blow Miss Larson had received. For years, she had managed to avoid a nursing home, and now, through the benevolence of Medicare, she was eligible for, and forced to accept, institutionalization. There was no way the social worker could sugarcoat the pill, no family she could smile at and be helpful to, no gratitude from the withdrawn old lady in the bed.



After that we didn't have much more to say to one another. That night the bedbugs attacked in full force and I packed my carpetbag and left old Gutless Wonder with two days' rent paid in advance.

4.

We walked slowly through the pretend garden, just a narrow walk surrounded by tiny evergreen bushes and casually placed rock. The old woman clutched my arm and begged to be taken back to her room. She was too weak to walk, too tired, she didn't want to be outside. I was younger, stronger, pulling her along, ignoring her plea. She needed to exercise, needed to be out of that place; if she just stayed in bed she would soon die. Walk, I told her, walk. You must get your strength back. Come on, I said, tugging not so gently now and hearing my voice impatient, you simply must move around.

She had been my friend. We had met months before at a lecture when, bored and feeling guilty, both of us had tried to leave the hall without being noticed and collided in the doorway. I had smiled because she looked so startled, like a child caught with forbidden sweets. "It's like leaving church in the middle of a sermon," I said. "You feel you've offended God." We laughed and left the building together.

There was seventy years' difference in our ages. We shared a mild cynicism, met frequently for lunch, and tore apart the reputation and motives of public figures. She considered herself a conservative, I was a radical. Nothing ever changes, she would say, you must save the things that are good and familiar, otherwise people become confused and destroy everything. Nobody has ever tried to change *enough*, I would retort; everything must change if the world is to be a fit place to live.

And so we would talk. She was ninety-six years old. Her passion was bridge. She liked order, quiet, things properly arranged. For thirty years she had taught mathematics to uninterested high school students; she had never found a pupil, she said one day, who could understand the beauty of numbers, of problems neatly solved. how beautiful the arrangement of a difficult problem on a page. That was the only time I ever heard her express an unfulfilled hope. She had been one of the first women to graduate from Stanford University and still wore her hair cut in a boyish bob, a style once considered a threat to home and family and country. Deep-set, lively blue eyes peered at the world with stubborn distrust. I think she had been beautiful, the bones of her face cleaned of superfluous flesh, her aquiline nose stretching out and the nostrils flaring with each breath. She was rather like mathematics; a cipher, a code, a human being pared down to the essential

parts. Nothing sloppy or sentimental about Miss Larson. She was ninety-six years old, a maiden lady without family and with few friends.

After she was forced to retire from teaching she moved into a private residence club and lived there for thirty years. Her life was orderly—I was the first new variable, she said, in twenty years. She desired nothing, lacked nothing, did what she pleased in the order she pleased. She thought my life utter chaos, my politics anarchy, my appearance slovenly, my habits unhealthy. I thought her rigid, frozen, unemotional, detached; I once told her I thought I injected a bit of healthy dirt into her life. I was very fond of her and had no idea why she tolerated me.

She became ill during a bridge tournament. That morning, Miss Larson had wakened early, excited and looking forward to a long day of playing her favorite game with first-rate opponents. She was conscious of mild nausea and a sharp pain in her side. But she was old and accustomed to functioning with occasional discomfort. Just excitement, she told herself as she carefully dressed. The pain in her side was enough to make her move carefully and slowly. I am ninety-six years old, she thought, and I still get a catch in my side when I am excited. I remember my first day of teaching, it was the same thing. I couldn't eat, felt so weak, and those high school boys all looked so huge and menacing. Well, I soon showed them who ruled the classroom. And today, well, today I feel I am going to play fine bridge.

She did play fine bridge that day, and when the final cards were played, she asked that someone call her doctor. She felt too faint to stand and the pain had become a grasping, digging presence, making breathing difficult. An ambulance was called, and she went directly from six hours of tournament bridge to the hospital operating room. Miss Larson had gallstones.

The operation was a complete success, no physical difficulties were experienced, she simply entered what she later referred to as her "psychedelic stage." Three days after surgery, the night nurses were surprised to hear a loud, argumentative voice coming from her room. When they entered, they found her standing by her bed shaking her fist at a corner of the room and demanding that her pupils pay attention to the algebra lesson. She was confused when confronted by the nurses and began to cry. Throughout that night and early morning, the staff found it necessary to keep someone in the room.

The next morning, the doctor ordered private-duty nurses twenty-four hours a day for Miss Larson, and she became the first patient I had cared for in four years. She found this very amusing, during her lucid moments, because we had often argued about my reasons for disliking nursing.

"I see things," she announced to me that first

cash checks? Well, pretty soon, he was taking 50 percent of Eddie's check, plus room rent, plus something for not calling the hospital. And when Eddie died, old Gutless stole his clothes. Would have taken his teeth, too, but they stopped him. Man oughtn't be buried without his teeth, even if he is buried by the city."

Gutless did steal everything he could. Besides charging me four times the normal rent for my room, he had another small business on the side. Some of the winos in the area would give the hotel as their home address to the welfare office, and their checks would come there. But they preferred to stay on the street or in the cheaper flophouses which were unacceptable to the welfare department. Gutless would report that they lived in the comparative opulence of the "Pensioners Welcome" hotel, accept the mail, split the checks with the winos, and everyone was happy. The drunks could afford to drink, welfare could feel it was performing a social service by keeping drunks off the streets, and Gutless had more money. What he did with it was beyond me; he lived in two rooms off the lobby, dressed like the other old men, and was too unimaginative to have any expensive vices.

Since I was able to steal lunch, Harry and Al spent hours in the park with me, just taking it easy, talking about their lives, other people in the hotel, the world in general. They didn't believe in God or Man or the Devil, yet were capable of mouthing the most awful sanctimonious and patriotic clichés. I began to think they never had an original thought or noble moment. Everything about them—their faces, their bodies, their minds, their souls—was stunted and soiled. They lacked the ability even to *experience* their lives as real. Harry and Al were professional survivors. They saw only what was directly in front of them, they asked no questions, felt no anger, demanded no love; they just made do, just kept body and soul together. They reminded me of a couple of antique cockroaches, those marvelous insects that no amount of civilization can kill. Cockroaches survive everything; and so had Harry and Al. But at what a price. They had paid by giving up almost all human softness or warmth. I would sit on the park bench and wonder if that was the only way to survive, if you have to stop feeling, stop loving, stop caring, in order to live. It was frightening, but the longer I stayed around the hotel, the more convinced I became that nobody cared.

At the same time, I was aware that Harry and Al liked me. When I was more depressed than usual, they would try to cheer me up. They would tell horrible corny jokes, and even talk to me in the morning. Their efforts were awkward, but they tried to be my friend. And friendship was their one decent instinct. They had total loyalty and friendship for one an-

other. It wasn't love that kept them together, but something stronger. Need. They had met on the road about twenty years previously, and discovered that as a team they were able to survive with less trouble. Two men could cover more ground panhandling; two heads knew twice as many diners where you got bread and butter with soup, not just crackers; two men could work both sides of the street. And if there were two of them, they were less vulnerable to attack when tired or weak or asleep.

Their friendship for each other was really the only thing these two had; life had knocked everything else out. I began to be afraid I would disrupt their lives in some awful way, that I was disturbing some precarious equilibrium, some carefully nurtured blindness and insensitivity which enabled them to survive. The other old men in the hotel began to tease them, asking which one I preferred.

One night in the local Mom's Café I tried to talk about all this with the boys. Those "Mom's Café" signs mean that for 99 cents you get a complete meal—soup or salad, meat loaf, potatoes, gravy, dessert, coffee. The soup is watered-down canned soup, just like Mom's in the Depression. And the meat loaf is mostly bread crumbs. But the good places serve things hot and give you extra coffee free. So Mom's was a treat.

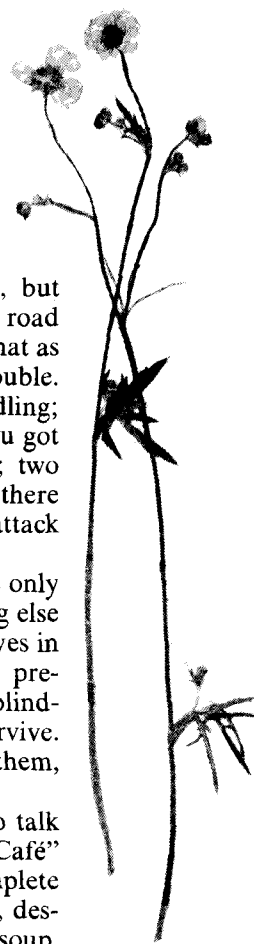
The problem was my inability to accept the responsibility of their friendship. I couldn't guarantee loyalty or support. I was just passing through.

Harry and Al stared dumbly into their coffee as I tried to explain my problem. They sensed my fear, maybe even before I did. The more I tried to talk, the sorrier I sounded. Before long I was ready to cry, ready to say I would take them home and take care of them forever and they wouldn't have to live like this anymore. I don't think I really meant it—I wasn't ready to give that much yet—I just felt so damn guilty about being young enough to leave that hotel and that neighborhood and live another way.

When Harry began to talk, his voice was so low I could barely hear. He and Al knew I was worried about them, knew I thought they should be different, better than they were. But they had learned to live one way and that was that. They liked it. Couldn't ask for more, couldn't settle for less. It was their way. But not mine. Besides, they didn't need me, didn't need my sentimentality. They had one another.

Their greatest fear was being so disabled or so sick they wouldn't be able to get on their feet again. Little things they could handle between them: the days Harry's knee wouldn't work, Al would do the running. But they didn't want to end up as "vegetables."

So like Huck and Tom they had cut their thumbs and sworn that if one became so ill that complete recovery was a remote possibility, the other would smother him with a pillow.



The latter part of life; an advanced period of life; also, seniority; state of being old. ("Nor wrong mine age with this indignity." Shakespeare)

their final analysis of me was that I was a fairly harmless crank.

That first afternoon we spent in a nearby park. They had one bench they always sat on, close to the street so they wouldn't lose the comforting smell of the city. Both men hated the country; they distrusted anything that looked too close to the earth. I would lie on the grass and they were both convinced I would die of worms or some other dread disease. They never saw any contradiction between this and the fact that they continually itched and scratched from various bug bites.

We agreed to meet in the morning outside their room in the hotel. I glanced in when Harry opened the door; the room was so small that they had to turn sideways and scuttle to move between the beds; they had no bureau, and clothing was simply tossed in piles around the room. Everything seemed both dusty and water-stained, like a very old and slightly leaky tomb. They wore the same clothing every day. It never seemed to get any dirtier or cleaner; maybe they each had several outfits in the same stage of filth and disrepair.

A day with Harry and Al always started with coffee and a doughnut at a diner twelve blocks away, to which one walked. Twelve blocks, in the morning, before coffee. All three of us would silently move down the cement wrapped in our own misery. I felt sorry for myself. Harry tried to move in a way to minimize the pain in a bad knee. Al would blink, blink, mutter, and wipe his mouth every fifth step. The reason we went twelve blocks was that in that diner one could buy day-old pastries: 15 cents fresh, 7 cents day old; coffee 10 cents, refill for a nickel. That was breakfast. No talking. Everyone in the diner was in the same state of early-morning sorrow, that moment of gathering strength to face a day over which one has no control. You have to be ready for anything, surprised by nothing.

Neither man was on any kind of public assistance. Al insisted he had tried to get aid and had been turned down. Harry didn't say much, but my guess is that he had some reason for failing to apply; maybe a family abandoned somewhere or jail time not yet served. Their days were spent scurrying around the city, like chiggers under the skin of civilization. They lived by panhandling and petty thievery (mostly shoplifting), occasionally taking a job "on the docks" or washing cars or with a moving company that hired day labor for a buck an hour, a quarter kicked back. In my honor they free-lanced a few days. They showed me how to work a street: at the stoplights, each would rush a car, preferring two women or an older couple in it, wipe the windshield, and ask for money. Refusal meant they had a right to hurl unspeakable obscenities in the "customer's" face. Working the street usually meant more money than

just straight panhandling, but sometimes you would be hassled by the cops. And you didn't do it when high school kids were on their way home. (Both men were terrified of teen-age males. It was an almost mystical terror, like primitive devil fear. They would rather be hassled by cops than by teen-age boys.)

I tried panhandling. I was terrible at it. Harry said I asked as if I expected to be refused, and didn't deserve any help. He was a master. He could make himself look older, yet still proud. He would shuffle up, plant himself in front of the "mark" as if by accident, and say, "I's old, cold, hungry. Can't work, bad knee. Could you give me a little change to get to the Veterans Hospital?" It always worked. I think Harry usually chose to ask older affluent men, men who were facing their own retirement and old age. They would give him money just to get him out of the way. Al would hit on women. With his drool and slightly lopsided appearance, he frightened money out of them.

Actually, I think they preferred to work rather than panhandle. But some days, physical labor was impossible for them. So they would beg. Or steal. One of the reasons Harry and Al finally accepted me was that I was a better shoplifter than they were. They were obviously out to steal. I could go into one of the big supermarkets, pass for a shabby student or maybe a sloppy housewife, and come out with enough food for lunch every day. I also tried to get them some new clothes—shirts, sweaters, underwear—but they promptly sold everything I gave them.

We lived in a pretty tight little world, the three of us. I began to find myself neglecting to bathe at night, and leaving my hair in braids instead of washing it. Since we did the same thing everyday, I wore the same clothes. Just like Harry and Al.

People would really stare at the three of us. At first I was self-conscious, but I learned to stop *feeling* their eyes. I didn't need anything from them, and they didn't need anything from me. Just like Harry and Al.

We shared a boundless contempt for the hotel clerk. Harry called him the "Gutless Wonder," because he would steal from anyone, even the dying. Harry told me about the man who had been in my room, lived there a long time, slowly dying.

"There lay old Eddie, dying inch by inch, and swearing he didn't want to go to the city hospital. He knew they'd do some dreadful experiments or something, and he wanted to die in peace. So we would bring him food and medicine. But the Gutless Wonder couldn't wait to figure what was in it for him. You know how he charges 10 percent of value to

thunderstorm. It was an empty quietness, somehow, not the quiet of content or the stillness that follows good conversation, but just the absence of sound.

The desk clerk was a hostile cretin. He did not talk but interrogated. Was I from welfare? From the state? The city? What agency did I represent? Whom was I investigating? Anything I wanted to know, I could ask him. No sense bothering the old fools. Was I a cop? Maybe some kind of fed? Well, what did I want?

"A room. With bath, if you have it."

The clerk was not accustomed to listening, unless it was through a keyhole. Direct human communication seemed impossible. His face was webbed; in fact, the wrinkles were so dense that it seemed all expression was caught in a net.

"We don't handle day trade, lady. This here is a resident hotel. But maybe we can make a deal . . ."

Behind me I could feel ears straining to hear every word. I began to realize that the desk clerk knew of only two kinds of young women who could come to that hotel: social workers and hookers. Either way, he was out to make a buck, as long as he was protected. I knew I was blushing, and embarrassment made me angry. He had rooms available; I had seen the sign in the window. He was also the kind of person you couldn't let get by with anything. He was a small-time, small-brained creep; but he would be capable of sneaking up to my room with a passkey, or peeking through the keyhole, or making a grab as I walked by.

Anger was a dangerous emotion, because I was so hurt and confused over the direction my life was taking that I could not control rage. I would have cheerfully murdered that man, and something in my face must have frightened him. I repeated my request, quietly, not daring to look into his face because of my own anger, and he quickly closed a deal. A room, shared bath, two weeks in advance, \$40. He overcharged me.

As I closed the door of the room behind me, I almost regretted my persistence. I didn't mind being considered a dirty young lady so much as I minded living like one. I knew country poor, but not city poverty. The room was about 8 by 10 feet, just large enough for a bed, a bureau (the top covered by the scars of lonely drinking bouts, hundreds of circles left by wet glasses, and the edge marked by forgotten cigarettes) and a straight-backed chair. The room wasn't noticeably clean, but someone had been very generous with a scented spray. No obvious signs of insect occupation. It was a tiny, smelly, ugly room.

I was also worried about my motives for being there. I wasn't particularly interested in social reform, and I wasn't a reporter. I liked old people, and was interested in the problems of aging, but I didn't intend to make it my life's work. I had thought about

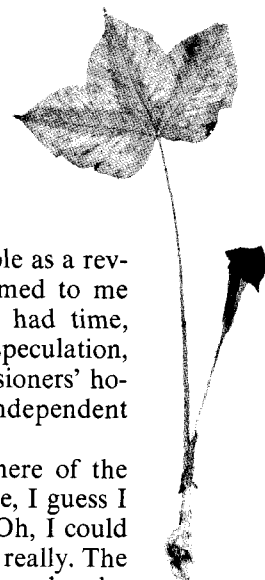
writing a book, about organizing old people as a revolutionary political force, because it seemed to me they were natural revolutionaries. They had time, and nothing to lose. But most of this was speculation, idle thought. Why was I here in this pensioners' hotel, populated by forty or so old, poor, independent people?

Why was I there? Partly, the atmosphere of the place suited me. Like the old people there, I guess I felt more abandoned than independent. Oh, I could manage. But it wasn't as if I had a choice, really. The place was right for me and for the old people who lived there. It was a kind of junkyard for rejected human beings.

When I had come upstairs the lobby had been buzzing. The conflict and hatred between myself and the clerk had been quite obvious. I hoped this would make the old men feel they could trust me, but I had no idea how to approach them. I felt stiff, awkward; I didn't know the rules observed by people who lived this way. I didn't want to hurt or embarrass anyone, and I couldn't afford to be hurt or embarrassed myself. I couldn't offer to pay someone to let me follow them around. (Excuse me, sir. I am doing research on dirty old men. Could I step into your shoes for a week? For a price? No? Why not? Because, even here at the bottom, you have a right to privacy and a right to choose your own company. Right, sir.) I felt they might be more friendly outside, maybe in one of the local diners.

I met Harry and Al over a salt shaker on the corner. They were both in their seventies, old enough and tough enough so that they remain difficult to describe. They looked alike, stringy in body and sour of face, with eyes that were never still. After a while I noticed that Harry did most of the talking, because Al seemed to have a slight drool, perhaps the result of a stroke. They had both been drifters since the Depression. Though ancient, they retained the moves of much younger men; like good athletes, they had learned to care for their bodies, to conserve their energies, to keep moving. I was impressed with their strength from the very beginning. They had nothing, hadn't ever been much, loved no one, and regretted nothing. They accepted things in a way that was difficult for me to understand.

Harry and Al didn't exactly seek my company, but they agreed to spend some time with me after I convinced them that I sincerely believed they had something to teach me, that I wasn't trying to cheat them, and that I wasn't any "do-gooder" either. They were pretty contemptuous of the human race in general, not having generous natures themselves, but were especially suspicious of "guv'ment do-gooders." I think



age, āj n fr. L. aetas, fr. aevum, lifetime 1. The part of an existence extending from the beginning to any given time. (Webster)

pieces in the quilt. It was very old, so old that even Aunt Mary didn't know whether or not the stories were true), and living in a "private place" in her mind.

Granny Sukie and Aunt Mary lived on a stipend from the state welfare office called "Old Age Assistance." At the time, for the two of them, they received about \$180 a month. The house was owned "outright," but they paid for taxes and insurance. The utility bill was negligible, since they cooked but one big meal a day on the old wood stove, and they went to bed with the sun and rose with the dawn, thus using very little electricity. They managed, with the small vegetable garden and a few pretty sad looking chickens, to eat fairly well. Neighbors frequently brought over fresh bread, or a pie, as was the custom in that part of the country. In fact, someone came by the house nearly every day, just to check on the old women and see that they were all right. They still had some family. They were as rich in resources as they were in years.

Some bright young man at the bank noticed one day that the signatures on the welfare checks were identical and he called the welfare office. That office, failing to find anything out from the old ladies, had asked that a member of the family look into the matter.

Aunt Mary was, quite properly, furious that someone would suspect that she was trying to cheat Granny Sukie. She straddled a worn spot in the linoleum, looking for all the world like an ancient sea turtle, her head darting from side to side and her eyes shining, and her low-built, almost legless body never moving an inch. Damn right, she signed both the checks. Did those fools in that office think the old lady could read and write, her with no sight for thirty-more years? She always knew those ladies-aide women or social women or whatever you called them wouldn't give something for nothing. What did they want? The house? Granny's jewelry? Were they going to send her, send Aunt Mary, to jail so's they could come and drag Granny away and take it all? You never got something for nothing, she knew it, always knew it, shouldn't have started accepting the money in the first place. Well, she'd pay back every last cent. She'd never done nothing dishonest . . .

Aunt Mary against the society of social officialdom was something to see. She had done nothing wrong and that was that. "They" had offered *them* the money; a busy woman with a leather case like a man's came out one day, years ago, and filled out some papers. The money came to the letter box every month, and once in a while some snoopy lady would come and ask questions, refusing tea or any refreshment like she was too good . . . Social officials were simply routed. First of all, Aunt Mary had no idea of their existence. She wouldn't talk to them. And sec-

ond, to stop the checks now would mean someone had been making an error every month for years. So the old sea turtle beat the great black birds. In the little house in the gentle hills, things go on much as they have for years. Agelessly aging.

3.

I decided to spend some time in the hotel because of the sign painted on the building: Pensioners Welcome. The sign meant just this: the owners would accept pensioners as lodgers, not provide any special service or anything. They would tolerate old men and women. The hotel itself was located in an unlovely section of a singularly unlovely city, full of small hotels, greasy spoons, liquor stores that advertise specials on muscatel and Tokay wines, and over all was a feeling of decay.

If the owner had had any sense and any insurance coverage, he would have been out looking for a good arsonist. The building seemed structurally sound—at least, it didn't lean—but the minute you walked inside the door, you could smell it, feel it: the place couldn't be saved. There are some buildings where too much has happened, where the walls can't support any more life. They are full, finished.

My own mood as I walked down the street was like that of the hotel. I felt finished, depressed, abandoned. I had begun research on the problems of old people, had spent three weeks working in a nursing home and a month as a visiting nurse, and was very full of other people's misery. My marriage had not long before been declared a disaster, and I was just beginning to come out of numbness into the real despair. I had been able to sit for hours, for days, without moving, just staring straight ahead. Now I was trying hard to "pull myself together" and "straighten UP." I felt like the old people I was trying to understand: sick and lonely and wondering if it was worth the trouble to take another breath.

The carpet in the lobby had once had an elaborate pattern, maybe even colorful, like that found in old movie theaters. Time and dirt had erased everything but shadows. Here and there a certain brightness in the pattern suggested the past presence of some piece of furniture, but now there was only the clerk's desk in one corner and some uncomfortable chairs. A few old men sat around, successfully blending in with the walls and furniture.

I walked in carrying my own burden of loneliness. It seemed like an appropriate place for me, at the time, even if I wasn't a pensioner. I needed a totally new and undemanding environment. I wanted to be someplace where nothing reminded me of normal happy things; someplace where a deep, ragged sigh would not sound unusual. The lobby was still, so quiet it seemed to be waiting for an earthquake or a

A kind of cultural attitude makes me bigoted against old people; it makes me think young is best; it makes me treat old people like outcasts.

Hate that gray? Wash it away!

Wrinkle cream.

Monkey glands.

Face-lifting.

Look like a bride again.

Don't trust anyone over thirty.

I fear growing old.

Feel Young Again!

I am afraid to grow old—we're all afraid. In fact, the fear of growing old is so great that every aged person is an insult and a threat to the society. They remind us of our own death, that our body won't always remain smooth and responsive, but will someday betray us by aging, wrinkling, faltering, failing. The ideal way to age would be to grow slowly invisible, gradually disappearing, without causing worry or discomfort to the young. In some ways that does happen. Sitting in a small park across from a nursing home one day, I noticed that the young mothers and their children gathered on one side, and the old people from the home on the other. Whenever a youngster would run over to the "wrong" side, chasing a ball or just trying to cover all the available space, the old people would lean forward and smile. But before any communication could be established, the mother would come over, murmuring embarrassed apologies, and take her child back to the "young" side.

Now, it seemed to me that the children didn't feel any particular fear and the old people didn't seem to be threatened by the children. The division of space was drawn by the mothers. And the mothers never looked at the old people who lined the other side of the park like so many pigeons perched on the benches. These well-dressed young matrons had a way of sliding their eyes over, around, through the old people; they never looked at them directly. The old people may as well have been invisible; they had no reality for the youngsters, who were not permitted to speak to them, and they offended the aesthetic eye of the mothers.

My early experiences were somewhat different; since I grew up in a small town, my childhood had more of a nineteenth-century flavor. I knew a lot of old people, and considered some of them friends. There was no culturally defined way for me to "relate" to old people, except the rules of courtesy which applied to all adults. My grandparents were an integral and important part of the family and of the community. I sometimes have a dreadful fear that mine will be the last generation to know old people as friends, to have a sense of what growing old means, to respect and understand man's mortality and his courage in the face of death. Mine may be

the last generation to have a sense of living history, of stories passed from generation to generation, of identity established by family history.

2.

In a hill town in eastern Kentucky, I met an old woman called Granny Sukie. She was more than a hundred years old, according to her family, and now spent most of her time wrapped in a quilt sitting by the fireplace in the winter and on the porch in the summer. Granny Sukie was cared for by "Aunt" Mary, no blood relation but considered kin by marriage. Aunt Mary was pushing seventy when I first met her, and she told me she had been caring for "the old lady" for thirty years. Their relationship had begun quite naturally: Granny Sukie needed someone to care for her, and Aunt Mary needed somewhere to live.

Granny Sukie was blind now, had been for many years. But she knew her way around in the way only a woman who has cleaned and scrubbed every inch of space can know a house; and she knew every tree and shrub in the small yard the same way. She had planted them, had nurtured them, had watched them grow. Even though she could not see anymore, things in the area of her home remained so familiar that her step never faltered.

She told me one day, "The last years of a woman's life should be spent in trying to settle what's inside. Early on a woman is so filled with things outside—her looks and her husband, her children and her home—that she never has a chance to be just private. I've had more private time, now, than I need; but I value these years all the same. I miss readin' and I wonder sometimes if the hills have changed any. I've buried two husbands and three children . . . right up till now, my life's been good. But I wonder if Aunt Mary is gonna last long enough? Seems to me her arm feels thinner, and she isn't moving so quick. If Mary goes, I haven't much kin left . . . and if she gets sick, well, can I take care of her?"

Her face was so full of wrinkles and folds that sometimes I thought it would look the same upside down as right side up. Being blind had made her face appear eyeless, as if a sculptor's thumb had been drawn from temple to temple, leaving only a continuous deep crevice. She was tiny, so tiny I wondered if she would just shrink away. Compared to her body, her hands seemed outsized. They were still the hands of a homemaker; large, with red knuckles, the skin tightly drawn from washing clothes by hand with lye soap. Sometimes her hands would reach out as if looking for a job to do, a baby to bounce or a coat to mend. Those hands weren't used to being still. But now she spent her time dozing in her chair, wrapped in her quilt (she could tell stories about each of the



AGING IN THE LAND OF THE YOUNG

by Sharon Curtin

What burden are years if you have lived no more than thirty? The author has searched for answers from friends and strangers twice and three times her age, and writes of what it is like to learn the feeling of no longer growing, in a culture that worships youth.

1.

Old men, old women, almost 20 million of them. They constitute 10 percent of the total population, and the percentage is steadily growing. Some of them, like conspirators, walk all bent over, as if hiding some precious secret, filled with self-protection. The body seems to gather itself around those vital parts, folding shoulders, arms, pelvis like a fading rose. Watch and you see how fragile old people come to think they are.

Aging paints every action gray, lies heavy on every movement, imprisons every thought. It governs each decision with a ruthless and single-minded perversity. To age is to learn the feeling of no longer growing, of struggling to do old tasks, to remember familiar actions. The cells of the brain are destroyed with thousands of unfelt tiny strokes, little pockets of clotted blood wiping out memories and abilities without warning. The body seems slowly to give up, randomly stopping, sometimes starting again as if to torture and tease with the memory of lost strength. Hands become clumsy, frail transparencies, held together with knotted blue veins.

Sometimes it seems as if the distance between your feet and the floor were constantly changing, as if you were walking on shifting and not quite solid ground. One foot down, slowly, carefully, force the other foot forward. Sometimes you are a shuffler, not daring to lift your feet from the uncertain earth but forced to slide hesitantly forward in little whispering movements. Sometimes you are able to "step out," but this effort—in fact the pure exhilaration of easy movement—soon exhausts you.

The world becomes narrower as friends and family die or move away. To climb stairs, to ride in a car, to walk to the corner, to talk on the telephone; each action seems to take away from the energy needed to stay alive. Everything is limited by the strength you hoard greedily. Your needs decrease, you require less food, less sleep, and finally less human contact; yet this little bit becomes more and more difficult. You fear that one day you will be reduced to the simple acts of breathing and taking nourishment. This is the ultimate stage you dread, the period of helplessness and hopelessness, when independence will be over.

There is nothing to prepare you for the experience of growing old. Living is a process, an irreversible progression toward old age and eventual death. You see men of eighty still vital and straight as oaks; you see men of fifty reduced to gray shadows in the human landscape. The cellular clock differs for each one of us, and is profoundly affected by our own life experiences, our heredity, and perhaps most important, by the concepts of aging encountered in society and in oneself.

The aged live with enforced leisure, on fixed incomes, subject to many chronic illnesses, and most of their money goes to keep a roof over their heads. They also live in a culture that worships youth.

The Renoirs in the Delicatessen

original. She gave me 300 francs for it, and then she sold it right away. Sometime later, a friend of mine bought it at an auction for 1000 francs. He called me and said, 'I'd like you to see what I bought.' He never liked my sculpture—he thought I was too modern. So I go to his house. It was my Colodion. This is now 1920. I say to him, 'Look on the back—my signature.' My friend sold it, but I never saw it again."

De Creeft mentioned another sculpture. "A friend of mine made my portrait in clay—in 1918. He never finished it. I decided to finish it myself, and then I thought I'd have some fun. So I dressed it up as a man of the era of Louis XV, with curls, the shirt with frills. I brought it to an antiques store. The owner asked me, who is this guy? I said it was my great-grandfather and that I needed money. I asked if he could sell it for me. He took it. He called me a few days later, and he was all excited. 'De Creeft, come quickly,' he says to me. I say, 'What happened?' He says, 'Your great-grandfather has smallpox.' 'What?' So I go there and I see the spots on the sculpture. What had happened was that when I retouched the clay, nearby in my studio I had been carving a marble, and tiny chips of marble became encrusted in the clay. When I baked the Louis XV, I then gave it the white patina with water and milk. The antiques dealer had put the clay bust in a glass vitrine. It became hot in there, the marble chips calcified in the interior, and when it expanded, it popped out and made smallpox. Well, I took it home, I covered it, and sold it to somebody else."

De Creeft on the art of a sculptor: "The stone is like a woman; you'll have better results with finesse than with force."

MAY 3—A top dealer said to me: "The thing I hate about him (another dealer) is that when I tell a lie, he tells a bigger lie."

JUNE 5—Art forgers in the news. An assistant district attorney told me that David Stein, accused of faking Chagalls and Picassos, said he was once in Cocteau's studio when Cocteau, solely as an exercise, did a drawing in the style of Picasso. The next day, Picasso, a good friend of Cocteau's, came to visit him. Picasso saw the drawing on an easel. He liked the work so much, Stein told the DA, that he rushed over and signed it. Stein, however, did not always tell the truth.

One of the best stories on art fakes has to do with Michelangelo. Back in 1496, Lorenzo de Medici asked the twenty-one-year-old Michelangelo to make a Sleeping Cupid of marble in the style of ancient Greece. Michelangelo made it according to his patron's instructions. It was fashionable among Italian collectors in those days to acquire Greek sculpture. An art dealer bought the piece and soon sold it to a well-known collector. Later, the collector, realizing

he'd been bamboozled, demanded his money back.

Some scholars have said this anecdote was invented to show that Michelangelo, even at the age of twenty-one, was as gifted as the artists he copied. Anyway, the story has a moral. The collector rejected a fake Greek sculpture. But it also was an original by Michelangelo.

JULY 15—Lunch with Louis Marion, the art appraiser and former head of Parke-Bernet. One of his favorite auction stories happened many years ago. "It involved one of the world's top collectors, a multimillionaire," Marion said. "The millionaire's wife was sitting in the front row with two friends at a Parke-Bernet auction. The millionaire headed into the room with his latest girlfriend on his arm. Mr. Bernet, then one of the owners, rushed over to the millionaire and whispered to him, 'I don't think you should go down in there.' The millionaire was offended and snapped, 'Nobody tells me where I want to sit.' Bernet whispered again, 'Your wife is in the front row.' To which the millionaire responded, 'Oh, you're absolutely right. I'd rather sit in the balcony anyway.' Well, he's sitting upstairs in the balcony, and he bought about 90 percent of the items in the sale. His wife was the underbidder on almost every one of those items. She never knew who bought a thing."

"I remember another sale in the 1930s. In those days, William Randolph Hearst and Francis P. Garvan had terrible feuds at sales. On this particular day, Major Hiram Parke was auctioning some copper pots and pans. The whole lot was valued at about \$125. Both Hearst and Garvan had sent their representatives, and they were bidding like crazy. It didn't look as if they were going to stop. The bid finally got to \$500. Parke hit his gavel down and said, 'I'm holding up the sale.' He asked both men to meet him in his office. Each man said that he was afraid of being fired if he didn't come back with the pots and pans. Parke opened the bidding again, but this time neither man bid."

JULY 28—A museum director talking about an auction he'll never forget: "This dealer had come to New York some years ago to buy paintings with all his capital. He was drunk, and some thugs rolled him. The following morning he went to Parke-Bernet, still drunk, and literally bought out the sale. Toward the end of the sale his friend got him to leave on the pretext that his wife wanted to talk to him. He finally realized what he had done and arranged to pay off his indebtedness. The twist to the tale is that after the first few items he had bought so expensively—his hand was constantly poised in the air—thereafter he bought cheaply because nobody cared to bid against him. It was the greatest break of his life. He got everything dirt cheap." □

of visiting Russian filmmakers were in town and he was their host for an afternoon. He took them to the Museum of Modern Art, where they saw one of Shahn's portraits of Sacco and Vanzetti. They were shocked to see it hanging in a museum. "Are you allowed to have this here?" they asked Preminger incredulously. Preminger assured them that there was no problem. He said to me, "They had been filled with all this propaganda about capitalist America and had been told that the Sacco and Vanzetti case typified the injustices in the United States."

DECEMBER 20—The Boston Museum of Fine Arts has acquired a portrait by Raphael. [The painting was alleged to have been smuggled into this country and was eventually returned to the Italian government.] Abe, the dealer, called to tell me about a Raphael he sold during the early 1930s. "My friend Al, a dealer, had a fine painting by Raphael he was trying to sell to a guy in Kansas City. I lived in Kansas City at the time. 'I like it,' the guy said to Al. 'I tell you, next week is my wedding anniversary, and I'd like to give it to my wife as an anniversary present.' It was a \$125,000 deal. Al went over to this guy's house. They were drinking. Then the time came to show the picture. They hung it in the living room—the picture had a red background—and the guy's wife comes down, and she says, 'Oh, a red background, take it out of my house. Someone is going to die.' Well, they all got excited, and they couldn't figure out what she meant. Al left, stopped in a drugstore, and called me. 'The deal fell through. Do you have any ideas?' So I called a man I had sold some pictures to—he owned a department store. I told him my friend Al was in town with this great picture and I'd like to show it to him. He invited us to dinner. The guy lived in a mansion. When we got there, there was a Buick in the driveway and three cars in the garage. One of them was a Rolls-Royce. The Rolls-Royce was sitting there on jacks in the garage. The guy said times were tough, and he was afraid to drive around in it. Well, he looked at the Raphael, and he said he won't pay no \$125,000 for it. I said, OK, let me see what I can do, and we went home. Al drank a lot, and he was pretty tight, so I took him to his hotel. I put him to bed. About 8 o'clock that night the department-store owner calls up and says, 'Get Al.' He said he doesn't mind paying \$90,000 or \$100,000, but he won't go over that. I say to him, 'Leave it to me.' I was up all night figuring out how to make a deal on the picture. I didn't have Al to talk to because he was drunk. So I called my boss in New York. He says, 'What do you think?' I said that the guy has a Rolls-Royce, and my boss says we'll take that in trade. I called the department-store owner—it was now two in the morning. He said, 'What's the matter, Abe?' I said, 'I've been working and I got a deal. I'll make them take your Rolls in trade on a deal for the picture.' He said, 'Do you think you can do it?' I said, 'I think I can.' Next morning we went to his house and we

made the deal—\$90,000 and the Rolls. The thing was we were to drive to New York in the Rolls, and his man was to drive us. So we finally got all set, we got into the car, and off we went. We both sat in the car smoking cigars. We'd look at each other. We were talking like Rockefeller and Morgan. It was a lot of fun. We stopped off in Indianapolis. We went into a men's room, and an attendant got so excited he dropped Al's vest and broke his watch. Al says to me, 'See, that's what you get for having a Rolls-Royce.'

APRIL 23—Lunch with José De Creeft, the sculptor. At eighty-six he's more vibrant than men half his age. In 1906, he was a struggling artist in Paris. He made a plaster candleholder, but nobody wanted to buy it. A dealer told him, "This is the age of electricity." De Creeft threw it in a garbage can. Fifteen years later—by now he had made something of a reputation—De Creeft was walking through a flea market in Paris and saw the candleholder. He asked the price. Three francs. De Creeft offered two. "But this is a work of art," he was told. He refused to move higher and bought it for two francs. De Creeft took it home, cast it in bronze, put in electric wire, made a lamp of it, and sold it to a dealer for 300 francs.

De Creeft was in Montmartre in 1908. A collector asked him to make a terra cotta in the style of Colodion (1738–1814). "I made it, a nymph, a satyr, and two children. When I left my studio, I covered it with a rag. I had made it out of clay. It was about a foot wide, a foot and a half high. When I returned, it was smaller. My cat had slept on it and crushed it a little. I thought the cat made it look better. I was happy, the nymph was more graceful. I showed it to the collector, but he didn't like it. I said I was sorry. He gave me 75 francs for it. Then I sold it to an antiques dealer. I think she thought she could pass it off as an



The Renoirs in the Delicatessen

would sell it for \$2800, adding that since his purchase of prints from Franke had turned out most satisfactorily, he would do him a favor by selling the Klee. Said Caswell, with Elke Hofman translating patiently: "A friend of mine, from California, gave it to me to sell so that I could make a good commission and buy other etchings and drawings." Franke, after checking with Klee's son, Felix Klee, in Bern, Switzerland, who confirmed that the painting had been listed in Klee's inventory, bought it.

Franke liked the work so much that he had a color reproduction of it made, and he sent it in January, 1961, on New Year's cards to 1400 friends all over the world. Caswell, in the meantime, returned to New York, rented an apartment, and set himself up there as a dealer in primitive art.

Since the painting had been transported across state lines, its theft became a federal offense. The United States government, in preparing its case, would have liked Gunther Franke to come to this country to testify, but the dealer was ill. However, Elke Hofman did come. In February, 1963, three years and two months after the Klee had disappeared from UCLA, the trial began before Federal Judge Thomas F. Murphy and a jury. FBI agent Head and Miss Hofman were among those who testified, and Caswell was convicted. Judge Murphy sentenced him to two years in prison.

I met Caswell soon after his release from prison. I was then writing a book about art thefts. Caswell gave me some of the background of the case. Three weeks later he called me.

"Would you like to hear a funny story?"

"Yes."

"I've been trying to get a job working in an art gallery in New York. I was interviewed for this job as an attendant with a Madison Avenue gallery. They knew nothing about the theft of the Klee, but they were satisfied that I had the proper art history background. They told me the job was all mine. They asked me to return in a couple of days. Just as a formality, the president of the gallery liked to meet all new employees before they started work for him. Well, I showed up at the appointed hour and walked up to his secretary to introduce myself. Lo and behold, the secretary turns out to be Elke Hofman!"

Miss Hofman told her boss about Caswell's background, and Caswell didn't get the job. Caswell later found out that Miss Hofman was so impressed by New York during her stay as a witness at the time of the trial that on returning home to Munich, she wrote to the presiding judge, Thomas Murphy. With his help, she became a resident of the United States.

A year went by. One day I received a call from a friend who had formerly worked in the United States attorney's office.

"I went gallery-hopping with my wife last night," he said. "Guess who we ran into?"

"Who?"

"Elke Hofman."

"She was with her beau. You'll never guess who he is."

"Who?"

"Dan Head!"

In the bookstore today, a salesman pointed out Elke Hofman to me. She is tall, dark-haired, gracious. We chatted briefly. "Just think," said Elke Hofman, "if Caswell hadn't stolen that Klee, I wouldn't be here."

FEBRUARY 18—During the last fifty years of his life, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., collected 400 pieces of Chinese porcelain, the most important private collection of its kind in the world. Fong Chow, associate curator in charge of Far Eastern art of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, says that although many are from the same period, there are no duplicates; that those who know and love such work find they vary as one Rembrandt does from another. Seventy-four pieces from the collection were given to the museum in 1960 as part of Rockefeller's bequest. Two porcelains have a particularly interesting background. The two are a set. Many years ago, J. P. Morgan and Rockefeller each bought one. When they realized that each had only half of the set, which neither wanted to give up, they agreed to flip a coin, winner to get both for the original price. Rockefeller won the toss. He kept the set in his home. It is now part of the Metropolitan collection.



FEBRUARY 26—Someone up in Boston is using Gravymaster, a commercial brand of gravy, to forge signatures on the backs of canvases. The gravy supposedly gives an antique finish to the signature.

MARCH 2—Otto Preminger came to look at paintings by Ben Shahn. He said that a few years ago a group

"Nothing that I could see," I said. "The wheel just suddenly turned at right angles." I did not add that it did so while he was waving in drunken victory.

"Wow. So much for adult cycling." Harry looked around, still, I think, befogged. "Nice house," he said.

He may have been seeing it for the first time. "It certainly is." I agreed.

"Jimmy, do me a favor, will you? I don't want this stupid thing to ruin my own party. Stay here with the girls and let Tiger drive me down to Outpatient. We'll be back in no time."

I thought I should go along, frankly, to supervise the affair, but Harry's request was certainly sensible, so I stayed behind. I said, making light of things, "Get some ice on your way home. We're all out. That's steak or something you're holding to your eye."

"We will," Tiger said, and he led Harry to the old white convertible, and they drove off.

I wish to say that I enjoy the company of women in every aspect, but after a half hour with no word from the other men, the conversation suffocated. After forty-five minutes, Anne said to me, "Why don't you call? Just to inquire." I called, and Harry and Jack had not arrived at the hospital. I asked twice, urgently and with good manners, for the hospital people to check. Courteous, and apparently diligent, they checked twice. The men had not showed.

Anne had been at my side, and Marion behind me, while I was on the phone. "Why don't you and James go on down there," Anne said gently to Marion. "Jean and I will get dinner ready." Marion was terribly upset, but my wife can calm a rogue elephant. She is not especially pretty, but after the first month of our courtship I became unaware of any lack of beauty, except in occasional unfortunate photographs.

I helped Marion into the car I had rented at Logan Airport after flying up to Boston. She started to cry as she gave directions, and I wondered that I had had a crush on her, twenty-odd years ago, and had ached in my chest when I went to play squash so she and Harry could use our rooms. For all of her beauty and the ravaged quality, I wondered at my youthful lack of discernment. But, of course, I had a lot of crushes in those days.

The outpatient clinic at the Beverly Hospital was a muted place, with low lights and nobody screaming. I dread those clinics, Manhattan Hospital for one, with high fluorescents and always a kid howling. The staff was very polite, but they had not seen the men we described. I was at the phone, about to call the State Police, when I heard, through closed doors, Jack and Harry laughing. They entered laughing, still speaking their various patois. Harry had blood down all the right side of his face and neck, into his shirt. The hand towel I had given

him was wrapped, appropriately, I suppose, around his hand, and blood seeped through it. Looking back, I am glad Marion and I got there first, because the hospital people would surely otherwise have thrown them out, and perhaps called the police.

Even with Marion and me there to certify citizenship, so to speak, the girl at the front desk was reluctant to enter them until Harry tossed a Blue Cross card on her desk and she could fill out forms, keeping her disapproval busy, you might say. She led us down the hall to a small examining room, and left us there. Marion, obviously newly recovered from weeping, asked Harry, "What happened to your hand?"

"He put it through a window," Tiger supplied. Harry ignored her. I suspect neither of them very much liked the company of women, or the marriage situation, for all their hormones. A nurse came and examined the hand and bandaged it. It was only cut fingers, but they do bleed. A doctor appeared in a clean light-blue smock. He was Latin, with an unmistakable touch of Boricua, and Puerto Rican. Harry, lying on the table, on the paper, noticed that, and he and Jack talked at the doctor loudly in utterly rudimentary, and I'm sure gutter, Spanish, which did not ingratiate them to him in the least. On the contrary, it seemed to infuriate him, which struck Harry and Jack as terribly funny and they redoubled their efforts. The doctor ordered the nurse to clear the room, or he would not operate. Marion and Tiger and I left for the waiting room, but Tiger turned and glided back down the hall to watch. He was there for some time, and I don't, of course, know what he was watching, but it struck him as very funny, and he started laughing again. The doctor roared, "Get that man out of here! I refuse to operate with that man watching!" Jack, laughing still, came up the hall again. "OK, OK," he called.

"What were you doing down there!" Marion demanded, face all pinched in righteousness.

"I just wanted to see how he took it," Tiger explained. "His fingers were all like this at first." He held his hands rigid before his chest. "But he took a deep breath and the fingers relaxed. He did all right."

Marion, who is turning into rather a villainess here—but even a heroine would have trouble with what life was handing her—Marion, face still pinched in the ugly joy of being right, right, right, said, "It wouldn't be so funny if *you* were on that table being stitched!"

Here Jack's face became so baffled and innocent of guile that he appeared twenty years younger, and I saw my old roomie again. "It doesn't matter who's getting stitched, Marion," he said, becoming amused now that she should think it mattered. "Him or me. If I were getting stitched, he'd be down the hall, looking in and laughing, see how I took it." His voice rose at the end, as one asks a question. "Or Jimmy," he added, including me, which made me feel splendid and a brave comrade.

Marion turned on me. "It doesn't matter which one of you is down there?" she demanded.

"It doesn't matter," I said gently. "I think you're missing the point, Marion." Truthfully, it mattered tremendously to me that it was Harry and not me being sewed up, but I knew Harry and Jack well, and I understood what Jack meant, and what Harry would have meant, and I was trying to bridge the gap between them and womankind, and perhaps between them and humankind.

"It doesn't matter." Marion wanted total definition.

"Or only a little," I said. It mattered to *me*, but I was busy bridging.

"I see. Well, I've had enough of your *morituri te salutant* festival. I'm going home. Will you drive me, James?"

"I think I'd better drive them home, so they'll get there." I offered Marion my keys. "Take my car, if you don't mind driving. I think it's for the best."

"Jocks." Marion took my keys and went out the door. I felt sympathy for her amounting to pity. Nothing Mother had taught her, and nothing she had learned in her liberal education, had prepared her for what she must now face in middle years.

Tiger Jack and I sat on the waiting-room bench. He reached out and covered my hand with his, as though we were young dates at the movies. He was still smiling on the verge of laughter. "JesusGod, Jimmy, it's good to see you, old man."

"What took you so long?" I felt uncomfortable with his hand on mine. "How could you possibly spend an hour getting to this hospital?"

"Oh, yeah." Tiger laughed lightly then and throughout. "I was heading for the Danvers hospital, which is the only one I know around here, and Harry, who couldn't see all the way to the windshield with his glasses busted, was giving directions for the Beverly hospital, and the two, the hospitals, are about twenty miles apart, so we got lost. We stopped at a roadhouse for directions, and figured what the hell we'd have a stinger. Harry fell on the way out and put his hand through a pane of glass. Then we came straight here." He laughed hopelessly, amused and despairing at once.

I smiled. I knew them and I liked them. I had often wondered at Harvard—I am two and three years younger than they, among the other differences—how they could put a boy through all the mock wars of football and boxing, then send him into combat for a year, then give him more football and boxing in college, and expect to turn out a citizen at the end of the

violent process. It didn't make any sense to me then, and it doesn't now.

Harry arrived in the waiting room. He had thick tape over his right eye, his glasses were awry with one lens shattered, his face was swollen. Tiger stood to greet him. "How many pops they give you, baby?" he asked solicitously.

"I don't know. He was sewing around up there forever."

The doctor stopped at the waiting-room door. "Twelve stitches!" he said loudly to the girl at the desk, so she could make out a proper bill, I suppose. He turned and left, and Harry, raising an imaginary glass, called after him. "*Salud y pesetas!*" he toasted noisily. "*Viente-y-cinco mujeres y ciquenta tetas!*" He and Jack collapsed in laughter. The doctor turned in the hallway, in a fine anger, and said, "*Chuchas tu madres,*" and spat. "Harriet! Call the police! Get these bums out of here!" In anger his English was strongly accented. The girl picked up the phone.

With my vigorous urging, we left, Harry and Jack calling, "*Tomé Pepsi? Poco, poco? Hit dee spot!*" and similar inanities. I got them out the door and walked behind them across the parking lot. Jack scarcely came up to Harry's ear. He had his arm around Harry's waist, and Harry had an arm over Jack's shoulders. They held each other up, lunging along sideways and laughing. It had been just too funny, and it hadn't mattered at all which one got the stitches.

I was very much a rearguard action, in the military sense. I expected the police to come up behind us, and I wanted to be first to speak to them. There was an undeniable contagion to the laughter, and I laughed too, perhaps in the wake of madness. I would have liked briefly to have been between them, lurching along, for the camaraderie, but only briefly. I had not really belonged in that middle twenty years ago, and belonged there much less now, altered and matured as I was. I have missed something there, I know, but I think that on the whole it is just as well.

At the car they got into the back because the front seat was covered with drying blood, it didn't matter whose. I got in behind the wheel, getting some blood on my slacks because it was the least I could do. On the way to Harry's I was very sorry not to have gone to Myopia, because the next reunion, my twenty-fifth, was five long years off. I decided then that I would spend my twenty-fifth at the official reunion. One's twenty-fifth is most important, and one should spend it with a broader segment of one's classmates. □

LIFE & LETTERS

THE BRITISH NOVEL LIVES

by Frank Kermode

An *Atlantic* editor, proposing this piece, asked half-jokingly whether the title of Muriel Spark's book, *Not to Disturb*, might be regarded as a fair indication of the state of the British novel. It seems that word has got around that there's nothing much doing back home, where, before the British suffered what now looks like a permanent intellectual and imaginative power-cut, the modern novel got started. I think these reports are much exaggerated, but what can one do? Back in the 1590s, Francis Meres listed the poets of his day and matched them against the best the world could put up; but such chauvinism is untimely, and it would not seem right for me to provide a list of Britons who could go the distance with Mailer, Bellow, Roth, Malamud, Updike, Pynchon, Vonnegut, and so on, much less with our talented new competitors across the Channel. Still, something needs to be done.

First of all, a lot that seems to be wrong with the novel is really wrong with other things, namely the trade, and the literary scene generally. How does a writer get going and keep going in England? He doesn't sell stories to high-grade monthlies, because there aren't any. One famous British writer of stories told me that every time he risks devoting a month or two to a story he's faced with this prospect: if it pleases an American editor he is well paid, and amply supported for one or two months more, but if it doesn't he may have to take \$65 for it, almost a dead loss. This helps to explain why we have so few story-

writers, and also why it is difficult to get going.

Englishmen write novels, and send them to publishers. Everybody knows how risky this is—*Lucky Jim* and *Lord of the Flies* are famous for having wandered for years from publisher to publisher before anybody bit, and it's a reasonable guess that others, perhaps as good, were simply kicked around till they got lost. In fact, publishers are willing to admit that the chances of a good novel's getting into print constantly diminish. The reasons are partly economic. Publishers' readers are not paid enough. Book prices have risen fantastically, and a first novel, even if strongly recommended, is a big risk. The terms offered are likely to be very bad, for the publisher is really buying the author's later work, not this book, and if he has doubts, he doesn't buy. So it is virtually certain that there are many worthy novelists who don't get published at all.

If the book does get published, it runs into more trouble. Its chance of not being reviewed at all is high, its chance of being seriously reviewed is almost negligible. Few English publishers really trust advertising, and reviewing space is crucially important; but the provision of it is miserly in the extreme, especially in the big Sundays on which most depends. Fiction reviewers are by American standards unbelievably ill paid; when they get their bundle of new novels they can't afford to read them all, let alone write about them. They bundle three or four into their 800 words,

and sell the rest to booksellers. That good books are, under this system, either ignored or traduced cannot be doubted, and anybody who reads around could name a few, and cite reviews to illustrate total misreading and more or less elegant concealment of the fact that the method employed was dipping and skipping.

Finally, there is a great difference between the American and the English market. The resonance of a success is very much smaller in England; few writers attract much clamor—interviews on television and in the "serious" press—unless they have made themselves well known in other ways than by writing novels; these few are also accorded the privilege of a review all to themselves, usually a favorable one, though this has no necessary connection with desert. So it must be said that the apparent feebleness of the English novel doesn't necessarily reflect on the work of the novelists, and the most immediate requirement isn't better novels but improved communications. The first thing would be to ensure decent treatment of first novels; they should be competently assessed on publication. Novel reviewing should not be hackwork; the first public sorting is usually the most important, and the small chorus of indolent, indigent, or ignorant reviewers can kill not only a book but a career.

It so happens that the four novels before me are all by very well known writers, and were all extensively reviewed in Britain. It is not surprising, all things considered, that they were

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July Report on

Atlantic Monthly Press books



In the past year our children's books have received a full measure of awards. Here are some books of which we are especially proud, and the honors they have achieved:

ANNIE AND THE OLD ONE

by Miska Miles, illustrated by Peter Parnall. \$3.95.

Newbery Medal Honor Book
Christopher Medal

A ROOM MADE OF WINDOWS

by Eleanor Cameron. \$5.95.
Globe-Horn Book Award

The following are Notable Books listed by the American Library Association:

A ROOM MADE OF WINDOWS

by Eleanor Cameron. \$5.95.
(Age 10 up)

EMMA TUPPER'S DIARY

by Peter Dickinson. \$5.95.
(Age 12 up)

JINGO DJANGO

by Sid Fleischman. \$4.95.
(Ages 9-12)

ANNIE AND THE OLD ONE

by Miska Miles, illustrated by Peter Parnall. \$3.95.
(Picture book)

Among the American Library Association Best Books for Young Adults 1971:

A WILD THING

by Jean Renvoize. \$5.95.

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LITTLE, BROWN

for the most part incompetently reviewed (there were honorable exceptions). Last year everybody made a complete mess of Anthony Burgess' *MF*—and what kind of critic do you have to be to miss the point that if you fail to see what so remarkable a writer is doing it may be your fault? Muriel Spark suffers repeatedly from comparable failures. For fourteen years she has been fruitfully engaged in her intensely imaginative inquiries into the resources of fiction—a continuously subtle, inventive, and ambitious novelist. Yet her success has been somehow in spite of the expert commentators, who tend to regard her as finally trivial, lucky, or naive.

Her new book, *Not to Disturb* (Viking, \$5.00), is brief, lucky, and serious. When a story comes to be told, its end is foreknown, essentially, though not in every detail. But it is a convention that stories should be told without reference to this fact. What may be learned about fictions by abandoning this convention? In this story the servants know that their master and mistress have gone into the library and will never emerge alive; they will pay the price for their luridly sinful sexual behavior. As for the servants, they will make their fortunes by selling the serial, film, and other rights of their account of these events. From the outset they behave as if the abovestairs characters were already dead, as indeed in a sense they are; the story exists, and only needs to be told. Of course the telling must be interesting (with an interest other than the simple one in what happens in the end), or the servants, and for that matter the author, will fail to divert their readers and so make money out of the operation.

For the servants—equipped with scenarios, tape recorders, cameras, and their own extremely idiosyncratic ways of talking and behaving—are a figure of the author. They are somewhat deficient in ordinary human feelings, being, in a slightly crazy way, wholly dedicated to the series of events, all happening to other people, that constitute the tale. Although they have it all worked out they cannot expect to do better than God, who plans absolute things absolutely, but contingent things contingently. A number of unpredictable events do occur, but Lister the butler is able, like God, to take care of them. He has no difficulty with the Baron; the fact

that he is still alive as they all prepare to cash in on his death is, he says, a matter of "vulgar chronology"; as a character in the scenario the Baron has placed himself "within the realm of predestination." And when the idiot son of the Baron, howling in the attic, turns out to be the heir—something Lister had not foreseen—he merely remarks that "one foresees the unforeseen," and tidies up the problem by marrying the idiot to a pregnant housemaid accomplice.

This is a slightly horrified observation on how the novelist works. Two people are hanging about the grounds of the house; they are not in the scenario, but they don't bother Lister because, as he firmly states, "they don't come into the story." The novelist casually writes them out in a parenthesis: "Meanwhile the lightning, which strikes the clump of elms so that the two friends who huddle there are killed instantly without pain, zig-zags across the lawns, illuminating the lily pond and the sunken rose garden like a self-stricken flash-photographer, and like a zip-fastener ripped from its garment by a sexual maniac, it is flung slapdash across Lake Lemman and back to skim the rooftops of the house, leaving intact, however, the well-insulated telephone wires which Lister, on the telephone to Geneva, has rather feared might break down." This sentence has the same perfunctory efficiency as Lister, who interferes only as necessary. He distinguishes between "events that arise and those that merely follow after each other"; a born novelist, he is stuck on causality and finds that "those that arise are preferable." The other servants rightly admire him for his powers of organization and discrimination. They agree that he "can adjust whatever it is. Lister never dispartes, he symmetrises . . . Lister's got equibalance . . . what's more, he pertains."

That's what it takes, not just luck. To read this book for its Gothic fun, and not for its equibalance, pertinence, and symmetry, is a great waste. It has a family resemblance to the first of Mrs. Spark's researches, *The Comforters*, and to the delightful experimental novellas of the pre-Mandelbaum Gate days. But it is closer to the more recent books, *The Public Image* and *The Driver's Seat*. Much might be said about the change

of direction in her inquiries, but it is not for her to say it otherwise than in fictions. It is the critic's job, and a more useful one than that of lamenting the death of the novel in England.

Iris Murdoch also changes more than she's given credit for, and continually augments her ambition and resources. At one time she seemed to be fighting against her love for very elaborate plots with occult overtones, but now she appears to have accepted it as part of the deal, and is making these plots bear extraordinary burdens. Contrary to what is often said, and in spite of social resemblances between one novel and another, she never goes twice over the same ground. She is wonderfully inventive, and needs to be. This new book, *An Accidental Man* (Viking, \$7.95), is perfectly readable as fun, as a plot game, as a virtuoso exposition (there are some really ingenious sequences of letters, and bitty unscripted party conversations, new and valuable acquisitions to the technical capability), and yet there is more. The curse of elaborate plotting is that it seems to call for finality in the close—otherwise the reader, trained to expect this of complex cluing, feels cheated. This can block off many perspectives—onto personality, onto the strangeness of the reality which the fiction suggests. In this book Miss Murdoch avoids what she has called “quasi-theological finality,” just as she avoids, or ought to avoid, the imputation of self-indulgence in the plotting. Occasionally her feints and withdrawals make one think of Mrs. Spark; but they are essentially very different, the questing nonconformist and the disciplined Catholic. Miss Murdoch, though equipped with elaborate philosophical scenarios, is far readier than Mrs. Spark to think with the story, to use its many-layered complexities as an instrument of discovery rather than as a subject for research. She is, to that extent, less of a metanovelist than Mrs. Spark, though her plots are more mysterious.

In this book a young American scholar, Ludwig, is about to marry a rich English girl and take up an Oxford fellowship. His parents think he should come home and face the draft, and the book opens and closes on this predicament. Ludwig meanwhile having, after many vicissitudes, gone home. The Vietnam topicality is only

apparent; the real question is one of bearing witness in the absence of theological sanctions. What now stands in for God, who used to oversee these ethical contracts? “What does ‘so’ mean in: ‘This is how the world is, so that is what a man must do’?”

This ethical issue is embedded in a great tangle of plot. Austin Gibson Grey, the accidental man—a pun, since the reference is not only to a lack of essentiality but to Austin's habit of causing and suffering accidents crucial to the plot—is selfish, a destroyer and exploiter. His spiritual realm is that of the dark angels liberated by the death of God. His hated brother Matthew is kind, solves people's problems, but gives up goodness as beyond him. They represent the ambiguities of spirit in the modern world; at least they have some spiritual dimension, unlike the family of Ludwig's girl, Gracie, whose ethical actions are meaningless because they lack that dimension.

What is the relation of spirit to matter in the ordinary universe? When Dorina, Austin's estranged wife, is killed, Matthew states that the cause is not “doom, not fate” but “accident.” But the text, ambiguously didactic, speaks of “deep mythological forces” which “control the destinies of man,” and assures us that “the reality is huge and dark which lies beyond the lighted area of our intentions.” It is this reality that the novel tries to indicate. If the reader wants to explore it, transmute indications of magic into spirit, he must do it himself. The book announces, in its fullness and variety, its own incompleteness, the necessary imperfections of its research into necessity and grace. Active readers should find themselves busy enough to stop canting about their dissatisfaction with the modern novel.

The two new long stories, “The Scorpion God” and “Clonk Clonk,” which William Golding has published, with an older *jeu d'esprit* called “Envoy Extraordinary,” in *The Scorpion God* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$5.95) are so distinguished that only the modish reaction against this author can prevent due acknowledgment of his achievement. Golding's way is not to write at all until he has so fully imagined the piece, so perfectly endowed it with an appropriate

dialect, that he can omit all the extraneous gestures with which, in writing parables so strange and remote, an author might seek to solicit the reader's interest and understanding. Everything necessary is there, but everything is inexplicit.

“The Scorpion God” plunges us into the Egypt of an early dynasty, a world consisting of a few narrow miles of the Nile Valley, in which the Pharaoh, so long as he has the virile force to do it, holds up the sky, controls the flooding, and fertilizes the women of his family. When his strength fails he is consigned, in his triple coffin, to eternal life, along with his crook, his flail, and his body servants. Here the Pharaoh (“Great House”) fails; his son and heir, a boy deeply sick and degenerate as a consequence of his incestuous ancestry, does not want to succeed him. His Liar, a man who knows the impossible world beyond the valley—where there is ice, where men sleep with strangers—rejects his free trip to eternal life and becomes the new Pharaoh, prophet of the open exogamous society, ending by treachery a totalitarian state of ignorant innocence.

The peculiar power of this conception, the controlled poetry of the dialect, could be shown only by long quotation. Few novelists have offered the reader a clenched fist promising so much to the man who can open it. “Clonk Clonk” is even stranger, a Stone-Age story of a crippled tribesman who disgraces himself in the hunt; he is a flautist, his misery “creates an exactness of words,” and when he has to drop out of the hunting party, with its homosexual good spirits, he falls in with the women, who, orgiastic at full moon, show him a secret knowledge. The indentate vagina is a good place; there he discovers the Panic and the Orphic, and is welcomed back by the men on new terms. As usual in Golding a crucial stage in social evolution is the subject. The women are rational, matter-of-fact, and associate copulation with childbirth; but they also provide access to the Dionysian, without which male dreams are mere boyish fantasy. Again there is in this story a special idiom, beautifully explicit, yet concealing a central inexplicitness that challenges the reader. A great talent is reviving, and this book is comparable with Golding's finest achievement, *The Inheritors*.

Of all these writers Kingsley Amis least risks an unsympathetic hearing, though there is a danger that his new book, *Girl, 20* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$5.95), may be read as a simple putdown, by a sour convert to middle-aged rightism, of the youth cult and the London it dominates. It is this, but in a strangely complicated way. The narrator, Yandell, a music critic in his thirties, is equipped with the author's remarkable powers of caricature, of turning poseurs into gargoyles. The book is studded with absolutely Amisian jokes. A black man accosts the narrator: "You are an imperialist racist fascist," he says dutifully. "How on earth did you know?" asks Yandell. There is, in the jokes, in the rhetoric which breeds them, an unmistakable idiomatic quality. A homemade drink at a party: "a small tumbler containing what I tried, with some success, not to think of as a urine sample drawn from one gravely ill." Anybody might have compared the drink to a urine sample; what is private to Amis is "with some success," and, above all, the manic extension of the comparison—"drawn from one gravely ill."

Boutiques, pop music, the young and their sympathizers, are all given the treatment. There is also a fertile provision of comic incident. Sir Roy Vandervane, a successful musician of fifty-four years, is keeping up with youth in the shape of an appalling seventeen-year-old mistress and a rock group called Out Pigs. Yandell tries halfheartedly to save him, to help Vandervane's wife and rescue his daughter from despair and hard drugs. He fails all around. Yandell's general unsatisfactoriness lies in what more pretentious sages would call his detachment, distinguishing between that and the good condition of nonattachment. He likes sex without commitment, loves Weber but hates all music from Schönberg on, and all the modern manifestations of youth, its music, its politics, its manners. He shares his nice straight girl with another man, and yields her easily to a black man (no thick lips, and so straight as to be virtually white), who is willing to order her around in the way she prefers. The contributions to a sane view of the world that he registers all come from the black and from his girl's father, a wise man who nevertheless favors a temporary dictator-

ship, a brief reign of terror, and reoccupation of the colonies. Though we are to learn that the madness of southeast England over a short period of time is no index of the general condition of humanity, the moral diagram sketched by our instructor is always dissolving before our eyes; while he's being lethal to youth the text is lethal to him. It's precisely his way of looking at things, that comic detachment which so well renders the absurdity of others, that destroys him. The self-destructive Roy Vandervane, richly and lovingly imagined, comes out of it better than Yandell.

The tone of this book is extremely difficult to describe; one laughs a lot, but the sourness builds up, and then turns to something resembling tragedy. Like *The Anti-Death League* it's much more serious than it sounds, and Amis is not only an accomplished comedian but an original poet. He completes my case. Four remarkable novels in one batch may be rare, but it happened, and the occasion justifies a measure of noisy celebration, not only in aid of these writers but of all the others who deserve but rarely get the intelligent cooperation of reviewers and readers.

LISTEN TO PAINTING

by Alexander Eliot

The dusk is apple-green. The temperature, well below freezing. The silvery snow cuts at the bellies of the hounds. They have been on the go since dawn, but they ran down only one fox in all that time. Stiffly, the fox's carcass swings from the long pikestaff of a trudging man. Outside the Inn of Saint Eustace, a straw-fire flares. People are singeing a pig's bristles; they will have fresh pork at the inn tonight. The hunters do not pause, but pass on down the valley.

The valley stream stands still beneath a bridge, frozen as if by some sudden and deathly thought. Under the hill, a watermill hangs with its wheel shackled in icicles. Beyond, children skate and spin tops upon the jade-green pond. Their cries are faint, yet sharp and clear in the distance. You hear as well the whining of the worn-out hounds about your knees, and even the thin crackling sounds of the straw-fire back there. But how can this be so? The scene comes from Pieter Brueghel's famous picture at Vienna: *The Hunters in the Snow*. And painting is a silent art. That is, unless one makes the effort to do more than observe pictures . . .

But in fact everything speaks. A good test of painting is to ask what it says, or sings, to your inner ear. Simonides the Greek poet may have been the first person to define painting as "silent poetry," but many others have since done so.

I am not referring to Roy Lichtenstein's comic-strip blowups with their

balloon messages reading RAT-TAT-TAT and POW. They are silent; and that is the irony which makes them amusing to some. But when you look at Mark Rothko's huge canvases horizontally striped in only two or three cloud banks of color, you hear a chord, or possibly a blue-note, struck somewhere between the eardrum and the retina. The same holds true for Josef Albers' squares within squares of softly vibrating and upwelling colors. Give them time to work inside you, and they sound like vowels of a language spoken on a distant planet.

Going back to the period between the world wars, you find Salvador Dali's melted gold watch draped over the limb of a blasted tree and ticking squishily with infinite regret. From the same era come the golden groans of plump French horns in flames, painted by René Magritte. Such images cannot be called "life-enhancing," to use a favorite phrase of the art critic Bernard Berenson. However, Berenson spoke to and for a more complacent milieu than ours. He looked upon art as a necessary luxury, whereas I call it a force for heightened consciousness.

Go see George Bellows' masterpiece *Both Members of This Club*, at Washington's National Gallery. That dates from 1909, and yet it says something to which our country has not entirely awakened even now. The painting shows a black man and a white, both members of this "club" and nation, thudding leather-bound

fists against each other's vulnerable flesh. I say you have not truly witnessed this image, let alone received its message, until you hear the *zuk* of those mitts and the dry shuffle of the fighters' shoes on resin-strewn canvas, and their hoarse breathing and the yell of the encircling dark.

Even further back in time, *The Cry* is still re-echoing. This picture, at Oslo's National Gallery, is by the Van Gogh of the North: Edvard Munch. It shows a man in pain upon a bridge. His mouth is wide-open. He holds his hands pressed tight against his ears. "I was walking along the road," Munch wrote in explanation of this picture, "with two friends, and then the sun went down. The sky suddenly turned blood-red; and I felt a breath of melancholy, a gnawing pain under my heart. I stopped and leaned against the fence, dead-tired. Above the blue-black fjord and the town lay blood and tongues of fire. My friends walked on; and I remained behind, trembling with fear. I felt a long-drawn cry pass through nature."

Just over a hundred years ago, Paul Cézanne put the finishing strokes to his *Black Marble Clock* which is now in the Niarchos collection. The painting balances a giant and rosy-lipped seashell against a coffinlike clock. The ticking of the one and the distant ocean-hum of the other are both there, in the picture. Once you have set your ear to both, you hold two kinds of time together in your mind. Cézanne, especially, helps to expand a person's consciousness of the big things—even by picturing bric-a-brac on a tabletop.

"In the beginning was the Word." Watching the sparks fly from a knife grinder's wheel, you feel that if those sparks could speak they might say that "the beginning" was the shrill hiss of the whetstone. Francisco Goya once painted a knife grinder at work; the picture is in Budapest. Only listen to it, and the peasant figure with his thumb against the sparkling blade turns to a demiurge of terrible and wonderful power. Enough said. Eastern methods of meditation often involve concentrating upon a "mantrum" or sound which appears to be both suitable to the subject and universal in its implications. One can "meditate" in museums and in the mind's eye also. This means finding and concentrating on the "mantrum" of some particular masterpiece.



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A LA RECHERCHE DU PAIN PERDU

by Betty Suyker

A visit to the bakery shop of Pierre Poilane at Number 8 rue du Cherche-Midi in Paris's Sixth Arrondissement is an excursion into medieval France. Here the *gros pain* or *pain de campagne*—the large, round, crusty loaf that was the daily bread and almost mystical symbol of life itself to the people of France before the Revolution—is baked in the ancient way.

In the window of Monsieur Poilane's tiny shop, fresh bread is displayed as impressively as Monsieur Cartier sets out his pans of precious stones on the other side of the Seine. Each loaf, measuring about a foot in diameter, is slashed across its domed top with the traditional, functional "jets" that allow the crust to spread and the dough within to expand during baking. Or the slashes are sometimes supplanted by intricate appliquéd designs of sheaves of wheat and clusters of grapes circled with vine leaves.

The bakery is directly under the shop. Triangular stone steps, dating, they say, from the eleventh century and not nearly broad enough to provide a secure foothold, get progressively more obscured by drifts of flour as they spiral tightly downward into the hot nether region. Two muscular young men labor at dough trough and oven. They are dressed only in loincloths and rope-soled clogs—a gesture to practicality which is lost in the otherworldliness it brings to the scene.

Off in a dark corner of Poilane's cellar sits a large metal basin in which 440 pounds of *levain*, or dough-starter, is brooding. *Levain*, the non-sour French version of what Americans know as sourdough, was first devised by the ancient Egyptians who used yeast cells to ferment a mixture of flour and water to get a leavened dough.

Fermentation is that particular biochemical wonder in which tiny living creatures called yeasts gobble up sugar and starch and turn them into alcohol and carbon dioxide. In baking, the carbon dioxide, trapped in the sticky, elastic dough made with wheat or rye flour, collects in little

pockets which then swell and form air holes in the bread, thus leavening it. Only wheat or rye flour contains the necessary gluten to make the dough sticky and elastic enough to trap the carbon dioxide. The baking fixes the air holes permanently in the bread, cooks off the alcohol, and kills the yeast cells, thus preventing further fermentation.

The yeast cells first used by man are called wild yeasts, and like people, they have been evolving through the years. Scientists speak of "new races" and "mutations" of them. The particular wild yeast cells used by the ancients to make bread were probably the same as those they used to ferment honey, grape juice, and grain mash to make mead, wine, and beer. Some anthropologists even believe that making alcohol from fermented grain predates agriculture—that man, in fact, took to the hoe in order to take to his cups. Whether or not that is so, man was almost certainly a brewer before he was a baker.

Since wild yeast cells are always present in nature, carried by insects or on specks of dust, it is possible to start a *levain* by mixing together flour and water and simply setting the mixture outdoors, uncovered, on a warm humid day. This method can be improved upon by the addition to the mixture of some crushed ripe grapes. With irrepressible conviviality, wild yeast cells tend to congregate on the skins of ripe grapes. There they wait impatiently for some bare foot or mechanical winepress to break the grape skin and let them in. With or without smashed grapes, however, the flour and water mixture will attract its own yeasts, ferment, and foam. It must then be built up with successive feedings of flour and water and allowed to ferment and foam several more times until it has developed enough yeast cells to give rise to a batch of bread.

Making bread from even the most thoroughbred of *levains* is an extremely long and painstaking task. The *levain* method requires a continuum of baking in which a small wad of dough-starter, called a *chef*, saved

from the previous day's breadmaking is built up by several additions of flour and water into a *levain*, which in turn, after the next day's *chef* is set aside, is used to leaven the dough for the day's baking. Each batch of dough thus depends for its goodness on the previous day's batch; a single bad sack of flour or a flaw in the procedure can ruin not just one baking, but all future bakings from the particular *levain*.

In the most elaborate and best manifestation of breadmaking the baker would "work on three *levains*," a process that involved four measurements out and mixings in of flour, water, and salt, three kneadings, and a rise (or *pousse*) of at least seventeen hours in all. What with the susceptibility of the whole process to variations in temperature and humidity, the old-time baker's art was part calculus, part alchemy, part meteorology, and all endless, backbreaking labor. Says Poilane, "If you need to sleep a lot, you will not make bread."

Poilane bakes 1200 loaves of bread a day by the *levain* method. But he only counts eight hours from *chef* to baked bread. Nevertheless, his dough is measured and shaped by hand, and each loaf is cradled for its final rising in its own *banneton*, a specially designed rigid wicker basket just the size and shape of the desired loaf, lined with heavy rough cloth into which flour is rubbed to prevent the dough's sticking. Scores of round *bannetons*, each holding a warm, breathing, expanding lump of bread dough, are stacked loosely, just barely overlapping one another, along one wall of the bakery.

Poilane's oven is a masterpiece of Victorian solidity. Built a century ago of red brick and supporting metal bars, it is 14 feet deep, 10 feet wide, weighs 100 tons, and seems ready to burst with heat and air vibrations. The brick floor of the oven, upon which the bread is baked, is tilted up toward the back so that the baker can see the loaves in the rear. The ceiling of the oven, less than a foot above its floor, is lined with thousands of small oval tiles, and above the tiles is a thick layer of riverbed sand which serves as insulation.

Poilane, who supports the notion that the best way to bake bread is over wood, uses some 50 cubic feet of wood a day. The wood has to be

trucked in from outside Paris and broken by hand into small pieces.

The baker putting the loaves into the oven uses a *pelle*, a flat wooden paddle with a fifteen-foot handle, and a *lame*, a thin curved razor-sharp blade about five inches long, which he holds in his teeth. He rolls each risen loaf gently out of its *banneton* onto the *pelle*, and with flicks of the *lame* too fast to follow he cuts slashes across the top of each loaf to form the jets. Then he quickly thrusts the *pelle* through the oven door, slides the bread off onto the hot bricks, where it will bake for an hour. The baker works so rapidly that the entire operation from *banneton* to bricks is a single unbroken motion.

The pure *levain*-raised *pain de campagne* of Poilane and only a few other bakers in Paris is almost an anachronism in France today, although many Parisians treat themselves to one of Poilane's hefty loaves when they feel life is getting too flimsy for them. Even Madame Pompidou is said to have crossed his threshold to buy bread, and the bakery once delivered a surrealistic loaf twelve feet long to Salvador Dali. Since bread made by the *levain* method keeps fresh for long periods, Poilane ships it all over the world.

The beginning of the end for *pain de levain* in France was the rediscovery in 1665 of the ancient Roman and Greek technique of using *levure*, brewer's yeast gathered from the foam of beer, to give an added *pousse* to the *levain* and a lighter texture and more flavor to the bread. Louis XIV called together 75 wise men to decide if the new *levain-levure* bread was good for the public health. The wise men decided (45 to 30) that it was not, but the bakers kept on baking it and the people kept on eating it, so a wiser group of advisers was convened and voted it *must* be good for the public health. As for the rumor that it was Marie de Medicis who sponsored the new bread, Professor Raymond Calvel, master baker and author of the definitive French baking book, *La Boulangerie Moderne*, refutes all such notions, however widely held by bread historians. Writes Calvel, "It is difficult to concede that she sanctioned this bread in 1665 when history teaches us that she died in 1642."

Levain-levure bread is still made in France, but the bread we largely recognize as French bread today—the

crusty *baguettes*, *bâtards*, *parisiens*, *ficelles*, stale three or four hours after they come out of the oven, but heavenly until then—was brought to France 130 years ago by an Austrian army officer named Zang.

Zang, accompanied by his own small army of Viennese bakers, started a bread business in Paris in 1840 using a new method of leavening, the *poolisch*. *Poolisch*—its name, which indicates that the method originated in Poland, has obviously ricocheted off both Viennese and French tongues—is *levure* mixed with lots of water and a specially enriched flour in a bucket. This mixture is left to ferment for three to eight hours, depending on how much *levure* is used, into what Calvel describes as "a sort of liquid *levain*." It is, however, pure *levure*—the first use of straight *levure* for making bread in France. It won instant acceptance in Paris, and was almost the only method used from 1840 until 1920, when the "direct" method came into being, along with a wholesale swing over to automatic kneading machines. The ancient Romans had used kneading machines, and there were a

few in France as far back as the eighteenth century, but even in 1840 there were only seven such machines in Paris. During the 1908-1909 bakers' strike, there were just 6000 such machines in the 45,000 bakeries throughout France, but by 1920 every baker had one. Anyone who has ever kneaded a pound or two of bread dough can imagine what it must have been like to knead hundreds of pounds of it every day.

With the new machines the bakers, the bread, and the bread eaters probably reached, in the years between the two world wars, their happiest state of coexistence. It was a brief moment and it came after centuries of turmoil. Throughout history the French have been fanatical about bread. A few years ago a seventy-eight-year-old Frenchman wrote in *Paris-Match*, "The bread of France is more than a food. It is a whole art of living. It is almost our legend."

When the peasants (or *jacques*, as they were called) rebelled in the fourteenth-century *jacquerie*, their rallying cry was "*Le pain se lève!*" ("The bread is rising!") It must have been by the tedious *levain* method be-



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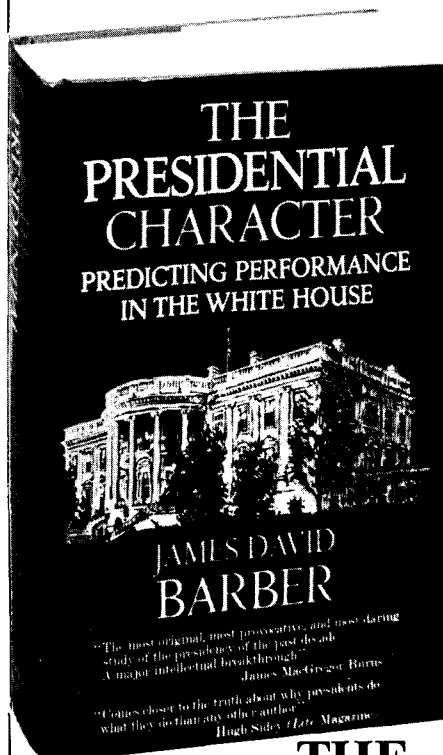
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cause it wasn't ready for the oven until July 14, 1789, when a mob with sprigs of wheat in their buttonholes stormed the Bastille. By October they were marching to Versailles crying "*Nous voulons du pain!*" ("We want bread!") and carrying Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, and the Dauphin back to Paris, shouting, "Here is the baker and the baker's wife and the baker's small assistant [*le petit mitron*]!" To render one small justice to "the baker's wife," she never said, "Let them eat cake." The remark was attributed to some never identified queen by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in a chapter of his *Confessions* almost certainly written when Marie Antoinette was a very young girl. Rousseau's version, moreover, was not "Let them eat cake," but "Let them eat brioche" ("*Qu'ils mangent de la brioche*").

Whoever said it, present-day Frenchmen may soon have to take the advice. Bread baking was never designed to fit into the modern pace of life. The quality of the bread is almost directly proportionate to the time it is given to rise and the number of deflations or, in the older methods, additional doses of ingredients it is given. Dough, in that it incorporates the living yeast, is a living thing, and must be pampered and disciplined and raised and molded as if it were a living thing.

The terrible problem is that bakers simply have too hard a life. They have to work in the middle of the night, they have a difficult time, in France, to break even since they are perpetually caught in the squeeze between ever increasing costs and the government-imposed price of bread.

In response to the price squeeze, the long nighttime hours, and the bone-crunching labor, French bakers have looked longingly at the dazzling possibilities of mechanization, automation, and all the other time- and labor-saving devices that have modernized the rest of the world. In 1956, they discovered a clever trick: they turned the mechanical kneading machines to a higher speed. With the new rapid kneading, all sorts of chemical changes took place. There was oxidation. The gluten didn't develop its necessary qualities. The second rise was too long. The bakers were forced to increase the amount of yeast to offset some of the problems caused by the augmented kneading. Some even added ascorbic acid (Vita-

min C) to induce the bread to hold the rise better and also bleached the flour. But that in turn called for less salt. In the end, the bread was much less flavorful and much lighter in weight.

All sorts of other traditional methods are being disposed of by French bakers. There are even bread factories in which *baguettes* are made mechanically, although as yet they have not been a big success. Some French are turning to Pain Jacquet, a packaged sandwich loaf much like American package bread that keeps for several days and tastes best toasted. Industrially produced bread still accounts for only 3 percent of the bread sold in France.

But in the local bakeries there are also many machines: dividing machines that cut and weigh the dough; shaping machines that form the loaves; new conveyor-belt ovens; metal molds, in which the loaves are both raised and baked, eliminating both *bannetons* and bricks. The molds, formed into *plaques* that hold as many as six loaves, have to be greased to keep the bread from sticking, thus adding a foreign flavor to the ordinary loaf of bread which had always been made only with flour, water, salt, and yeast.

One of the greatest achievements of the art of breadmaking in France had been the *cuisson à nu* (in which the bread, not necessarily the baker, is nude—that is, without a pan). If French bakers are giving that up, who will carry it on?

There is no true French bread made commercially in the United States. The best proof of this is that there is actually a company which jets *baguettes* made in France across the Atlantic every day—a madness, since real French bread only keeps fresh for three or four hours and the airborne loaves are like leather by the time they get here. Why all the French bakers who have emigrated to the United States should turn out to be *patissiers*, never *boulangers*, is a mystery. Perhaps there is simply more money in pastry, or perhaps the breadmakers of France have had to work too hard to think of travel. Maybe, drudging along with their noses in the dough trough, they believed the persistent myth, exploded by Julia Child and her fellow cookbook writer Simone Beck, that French bread could not be made

with the local brand of American flour.

The Americans, on the other hand, have perhaps not tried to make French bread because they believe that some sort of innate, God-given talent is involved, some magic sense, some fantastic manual dexterity, some artist's eyes. That bit of mythology is debunked in a small way every day by Professor Calvel, who teaches ordinary young bakers in

France and around the world how to make excellent French bread out of local ingredients. Whether or not Americans are willing to try depends largely on how far beyond industrialization and toward the good things of life they get. Meanwhile, observes Calvel, "the best French bread in the world today is not being made in Paris. It is being made in Tokyo!"

THE PERIPATETIC REVIEWER

by Edward Weeks

O JERUSALEM!

by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre
Simon and Schuster, \$10.00

The ideal literary collaboration is the result of friendship and of emotional experiences in which both writers have shared. The friendship of Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre begins in the SHAPE headquarters to which Collins had been assigned, fresh from Yale, and in which Lapierre was serving as an interpreter. For a time they went their separate ways in journalism, Collins as a foreign correspondent in North Africa and the Middle East, Lapierre as a reporter and editor for *Paris-Match*. At a reunion in Paris in 1961 they were excited at the prospect of writing a book together that would interest both French and American readers, and, as Collins put it, "that each of us would write simultaneously in his own language." Both had been deeply stirred by the Liberation of Paris in 1944; they remembered Hitler's crazy order to destroy the city, wondered how it had been frustrated, and out of their research grew their first book, *Is Paris Burning?*

Their new book is also about a city, the most contentious and dedicated place in man's memory. The name "Jerusalem" came from the ancient Hebrew, meaning "city of peace," but it has been sacred to not one but three religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; over forty centuries it has been fought for by David and the Pharaoh, Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar, Ptolemy and Herod, Titus and the Crusaders, Tamerlane

and the Saracens of Saladin. In 1917, when General Allenby entered the Jaffa Gate, walking the sacred stones humbly on foot, he carried with him a British Mandate and two deceptive promises which precluded peace: the Balfour Declaration, promising a Jewish national home, and a rival promise to which T. E. Lawrence had dedicated his life, promising the Arab inhabitants a state of their own. It was inevitable that a new civil war would erupt when in November, 1947, the General Assembly of the United Nations proposed to cut this ancient territory (half the size of Denmark) into two states but denying to each the sovereignty of Jerusalem.

The authors have concentrated their narrative on the year 1948. The British Army, which had policed the premises for thirty years, was planning to evacuate in May; Ben-Gurion, the head of the Jewish Agency, foresaw that the hundred thousand Jews in Jerusalem would be overwhelmed by the Arabs unless they were armed, and the Arab Legion under Glubb Pasha was planning to spearpoint just such an assault. This, then, is the story of the siege of Jerusalem, the sixteenth siege in its history, and probably the bloodiest, which would decide whether Israel would emerge as an independent or as a captive state. The odds favored the Arabs 30 to 1, but in unity and ingenuity the Jews had the better of it, as the authors are happy to relate.

In telling this epic Collins and Lapierre secured more than eight hundred interviews, piecing together, from the leaders and the led, the true story as the Arabs saw it before they turned to the Jews for their version,

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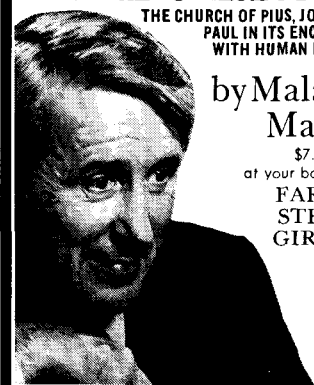


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the tension between the two camps still so bitter that they could not shuttle back and forth. Ambush and bombing, endlessly repeated, destroy pity, as we know from the brutish record of Belfast. What relieves the bloodshed in *O Jerusalem!*, what makes it such a humane book, are the portraits of the dedicated on both sides: Ben-Gurion, wise, patient, far-sighted; Golda Meir, sent to the United States to collect money for the arms so desperately needed, who arrived in New York with \$10 in her pocketbook and left thirty days later with \$50 million; Haim Slavine and Ehud Avriel, the one in the United States, the other in Europe, who found the war-surplus material and smuggled it in to Palestine; David Shaltiel, a former sergeant in the Foreign Legion, who took command of Jerusalem's Haganah; and Abdullah Tell and Glubb Pasha, Shaltiel's opponents. It is the endurance, the courage, and the compassion of the little people, the survivors of Dachau, those witnesses to the unbelievable persecution of our time, that one remembers. And Sir Alan Cunningham, that discerning, doughty Scot, who would have been a firmer referee had his government permitted.

THE LATE JOHN MARQUAND
by Stephen Birmingham
Lippincott, \$10.00

Stephen Birmingham, the author of *Our Crowd*, had reason to be grateful to John Marquand, for John, out of friendliness, read the manuscripts of Birmingham's first two novels, made constructive suggestions, and recommended them for publication. His biography is the work of a partisan who tends to exaggerate, who is unfamiliar with Marquand's Boston and Harvard, and who evaluates John's books as much by what they earned as by what they hold. His thesis is one which Marquand himself made public: that he was deprived by his improvident father of the advantages he might have enjoyed at St. Mark's and at Harvard, and that his lonely adolescence in Newburyport, the Clyde of his future novels, where he was ashamed of the eccentricities of his aunts, accounts for his bitterness and for the emphasis on class distinctions which recur throughout his serious work.

Mr. Birmingham was not permitted

to use the family papers, and he has made up for this omission by the testimony he garnered from the two women who exerted the most profound influence on Marquand's writing: Conney Fiske, the wife of John's best friend in Boston, and one of the few to whose taste and judgment he deferred; and, second, but of more intimate importance, Carol Brandt, the wife of Carl Brandt, Marquand's literary agent, who became, with her husband's acquiescence, John's mistress and amanuensis. Marquand learned to dictate his fiction to Carol with greater freedom than he enjoyed with any secretary, and his life with the two Brandts formed a triangle containing greater happiness than he was to know with either of his wives. In a manner of speaking, Carol is the heroine of this book, and her contribution gives it strength and novelty.

There is always a temptation for a young biographer to adopt, perhaps unconsciously, the mannerisms of the man he is writing about. As a raconteur and mimic Marquand was a master, and exaggeration was part of his performance. Perhaps this is responsible for the innumerable, often silly exaggerations with which the biography is strewn. "The bold young blades," as Birmingham calls the clubmen in the Harvard of 1914, did not swagger with "silk hats and walking sticks," and the awkward Marquand was too shrewd to suspect that he ever had a chance for the Porcellian Club, which, incidentally, is referred to not as "the Pig," but as "the Porc." There was never an "old quota system" of Jews at Harvard. Alfred McIntyre, John's publisher and the first to perceive the potential in *The Late George Apley*, was not a "timid" man; he was not accustomed to consuming "six martinis for lunch," and if there was ever talk at Little, Brown of publishing *Apley* anonymously, it was certainly not McIntyre who prompted it. In the famous trial in which John was pitted against the Hales in the disposition of the family properties, John's lawyer, F. Murray Forbes, did not appear "wearing a cutaway and a silk hat," nor, according to his lawyer, did John himself take the stand.

True, these are trivia, but the tendency to exaggerate goes still deeper in the portrayal of Christina Sedgwick and Adelaide Hooker, Mar-

quand's unhappy wives, who lend themselves to ridicule. John's cruel streak, his parsimony, his prickly aloofness from his children must have made him, as he once told me, "a hell of a man to live with," and the Sedgwicks' disdain for his popular writing could not have improved his temper. But in this disparagement his father-in-law, Alexander Sedgwick, who is never mentioned in the book, surely proved more of an irritant than "Uncle Ellery," the editor of *The Atlantic*.

Mr. Birmingham's judgment of John's novels is not mine; I pick *Wickford Point* and *Point of No Return* as the two best because of the sympathy which underlies the satire. But I agree that the secret of Marquand's appeal was the "absolute rightness" of the dialogue, as Clifton Fadiman puts it; "his special way of mixing merriment and melancholy," which Birmingham praises.

THE DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT
by Walter Lord
Norton, \$8.50

The War of 1812 was an uphill fight for the sorely divided Republic. The invasion of Canada had resulted in a bloody nose, and in the early months of 1814, after Napoleon's defeat, Wellington's Invincibles were released and on their way to teach America a lesson. The British blockade had strangled our economy as the Federalists' opposition to the war had disrupted our unity; Washington, the half-built capital presided over by a President who lacked force, was ripe for the plucking.

Walter Lord, with his flair for depicting people caught in a sudden crisis, has followed the swing of fortune which began with the capture and burning of Washington, then moved to the spirited repulse of the British at Baltimore, and ended with General Jackson's well-planned, crashing victory at New Orleans. All three of these major engagements were amphibious operations in which at the outset the American militia, poorly trained and ill armed, were no match for Wellington's veterans.

As a narrative, *The Dawn's Early Light* is handicapped by a weak beginning. It requires a special skill to describe the movement and encounter of troops, and this Mr. Lord possesses to a limited degree, with the re-

sult that the first third of his text reads like a chicken yard where the roosters are being decapitated. The characterization of President James Madison and his Cabinet members is superficial; it is never made clear why Secretary of War John Armstrong was so inert, why Secretary of State James Monroe dashed about placing the defenders of the Capital in the wrong spots, and why the commanding officer, Brigadier General William Henry Winder, was such a diligent muddlehead. The burning of Washington was a disgrace, and there are times when the author sounds as confused as its defenders.

The defense of Baltimore was an altogether different affair thanks to Major General Samuel Smith, a veteran of the Revolution and a shrewd driver for the short haul. Baltimore, a community of 45,000, was a rich prize. Its privateers had captured or sunk more than five hundred British ships, and the British, intoxicated with their success in Washington, were hot for revenge. But American troops, regular and volunteer, were now flocking to the city and over the ramparts of Fort McHenry flew the largest flag then on record, four hundred yards of broad stripes and bright stars, cut and sewn by Mary Pickersgill at the cost of \$405.90. General Smith had planned shrewdly and had fired up the gunners at Fort McHenry; and in this assault the British suffered from a divided command, and when General Ross, who had the final say ashore, was killed, the attackers retired to the fleet. Francis Scott Key, sent under a flag of truce to exchange a prisoner of war, watched the fighting from the British side, and out of his anxiety and exaltation came our national anthem.

The stiffening resistance at Baltimore aroused the country and gave Andrew Jackson of New Orleans the men, the firepower, and the warning he needed, and when Admiral Cochrane, the British C-in-C, with fresh reinforcements, sailed in for the biggest prize of all, the dice rolled against him and the British blunders led to a shocking defeat. Mr. Lord's narrative accelerates in interest and confidence in the latter half of the book, and his account of the reaction in London, where the level-headed Wellington had from the first taken a dim view of the British armada, bears a distant parallel to our distress in Vietnam.

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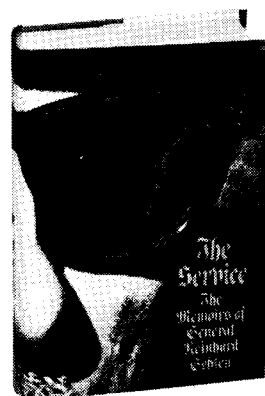
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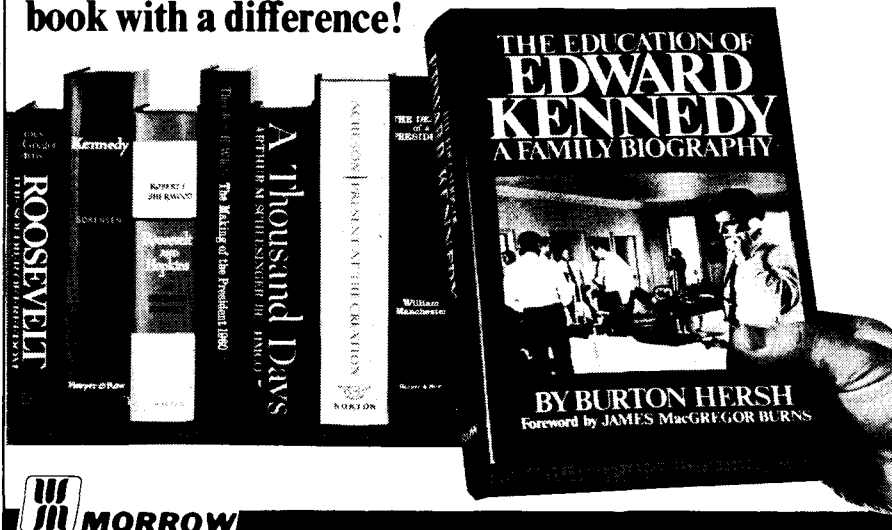
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SHORT REVIEWS: BOOKS

by Phoebe Adams

THE NIXONS by Edwin P. Hoyt. Random House, \$7.95. Solemn as a tombstone, Mr. Hoyt presents the history of the Nixon family in sugary grammar-school prose, with a general handing out of halos. It is fairly stupefying to contemplate a family which, in over two centuries on this continent, has failed to produce a single horse thief or deadbeat. The author professes to have discovered almost nothing about the Nixons in their pre-American incarnation, but readers interested in this area will find Nixons (or Nicksons) in *The Steel Bonnets* (Knopf, \$8.95), a history of the anarchic sixteenth century on the English-Scottish frontier. The author, George MacDonald Fraser, reports that "the sons of Nick were a troublesome breed," allied to the terrible Armstrongs and described as having many "loose men." In plain words, robbers and raiders on both sides of the border.

THE LEVANTER by Eric Ambler. Atheneum, \$6.95. What does a mongrel Middle Eastern businessman do when he finds Arab terrorists making bombs in his factory in the middle of the night? If he is Mr. Ambler's Michael Howell, he copes ingeniously. Do not be deterred by the slow start; this is first-class Ambler intrigue.

MEDITATIONS ON HUNTING by Ortega y Gasset. Scribner's, \$7.95. Ortega was a beautifully lucid writer, even in a relatively minor work like this analysis of the enduring attraction of the hunt. Although some of the assumptions about prehistoric man from which he worked have since been questioned, Ortega's argument still holds, and every page glitters with quotable sentences and provocative ideas. Translated by Howard B. Wescott.

ENEMIES, A LOVE STORY by Isaac Bashevis Singer. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, \$7.95. The general material of this novel (background does not quite suit the case) is both moving and convincing. It concerns a group of Polish

Jews who have survived Hitler and reached New York, where they all find themselves unable to forget the horrors they escaped or to enjoy their safety, and therefore resort to various eccentricities—exaggerated piety, nervous overactivity, chronic and profitless lying, alcohol. But the plot in which these unhappy people are involved verges on farce. Herman has two wives and a mistress. His frantic scuttlings and ineffectual deceptions are presented with great soberness. Soberness causes the reader to consider whether Herman is the type to catch women in bebies, and the answer is, no, which gives the novel's total action an air of contrivance despite the persuasiveness of individual episodes and characters.

OF MOSQUITOES, MOTHS, AND MICE by C. Brooke Worth. Norton, \$8.95. Entomological observations and experiments, described with charm as well as scholarship and sure to please amateur naturalists, particularly those less clever than Dr. Worth at catching luna moths.

POLICE IN TROUBLE by James F. Ahern. Hawthorn, \$6.95. Mr. Ahern was the police chief who kept things under control when New Haven, Connecticut, attracted a protest rally during the Black Panther trials. His story of that affair, including the melodramatic exaggerations of the FBI, is fascinating but accounts for only a small portion of his text. The greater part of the book describes police work, discusses the pressures that make it difficult at all levels, and proposes reforms. Mr. Ahern writes clearly and with considerable restraint, but manages nonetheless to lay a hard nightstick to numerous highly placed heads.

COCO CHANEL by Marcel Haedrich. Little, Brown, \$7.95. "Her Life, Her Secrets" is the subtitle, fair warning that the author's approach is sob-sisterish and his facts derived largely from Chanel, who was inventive with them. But Mr. Haedrich is not as naïve as he pretends, and this biography achieves considerable interest despite its exasperating percentage of chichi. Illustrations. Translated by Charles Lam Markmann.

THE FIFTH WORLD OF FORSTER BENNETT by Vincent Crapanzano.

Viking, \$7.95. A young anthropologist's journal of his stay with a Navaho family reveals, among other things, that while reservation life is basically stagnant, there is much coming and going and planning which gets nowhere. Direct information about Indians is almost certain to be interesting in one way or another, and in this respect, Mr. Crapanzano's book is standard. It is also cold; one has the impression that the author has emotions but was afraid to trust them even in a nonprofessional record.

LILLIAN HELLMAN by Richard Moody. Pegasus, Bobbs-Merrill, \$6.95. Mr. Moody's study of the playwright and her work is very earnest, reasonably sensible, and not nearly as interesting as Miss Hellman's autobiography and *The Collected Plays* (Little, Brown, \$15.00).

GUSTAV KLIMT by Werner Hofmann. New York Graphic Society, \$24.95; \$27.50 after July 1. Klimt's paintings, which offhand may strike the irreverent as a cross between Aubrey Beardsley and a Byzantine mosaic, are accompanied by a lengthy essay in which Mr. Hofmann describes the aesthetic climate of Vienna at the turn of the century, and elucidates the various artistic theories which warred against each other for public support. It was a lively time, and Klimt was in the forefront of the battle. Admirable reproductions: notes, bibliography, and so forth. Translated by Inge Goodwin.

GUSTAV KLIMT, with an introduction by Alfred Werner. Dover, \$3.00. Klimt's drawings, 100 of which are reproduced in this large paperbound book, were as loose and airy as his paintings were tight and metallic, but like the paintings, they concentrate on women.

SHAFT AMONG THE JEWS by Ernest Tidyman. Dial, \$5.95. Shaft acts better than he reads. Wait for the movie.

PRIVATE FACES/PUBLIC PLACES by Abigail McCarthy. Doubleday, \$8.95. Portions of Mrs. McCarthy's autobiography, recounting her years as a schoolteacher in South Dakota and Minnesota and her courtship with Eugene McCarthy, appeared in the June *Atlantic*.

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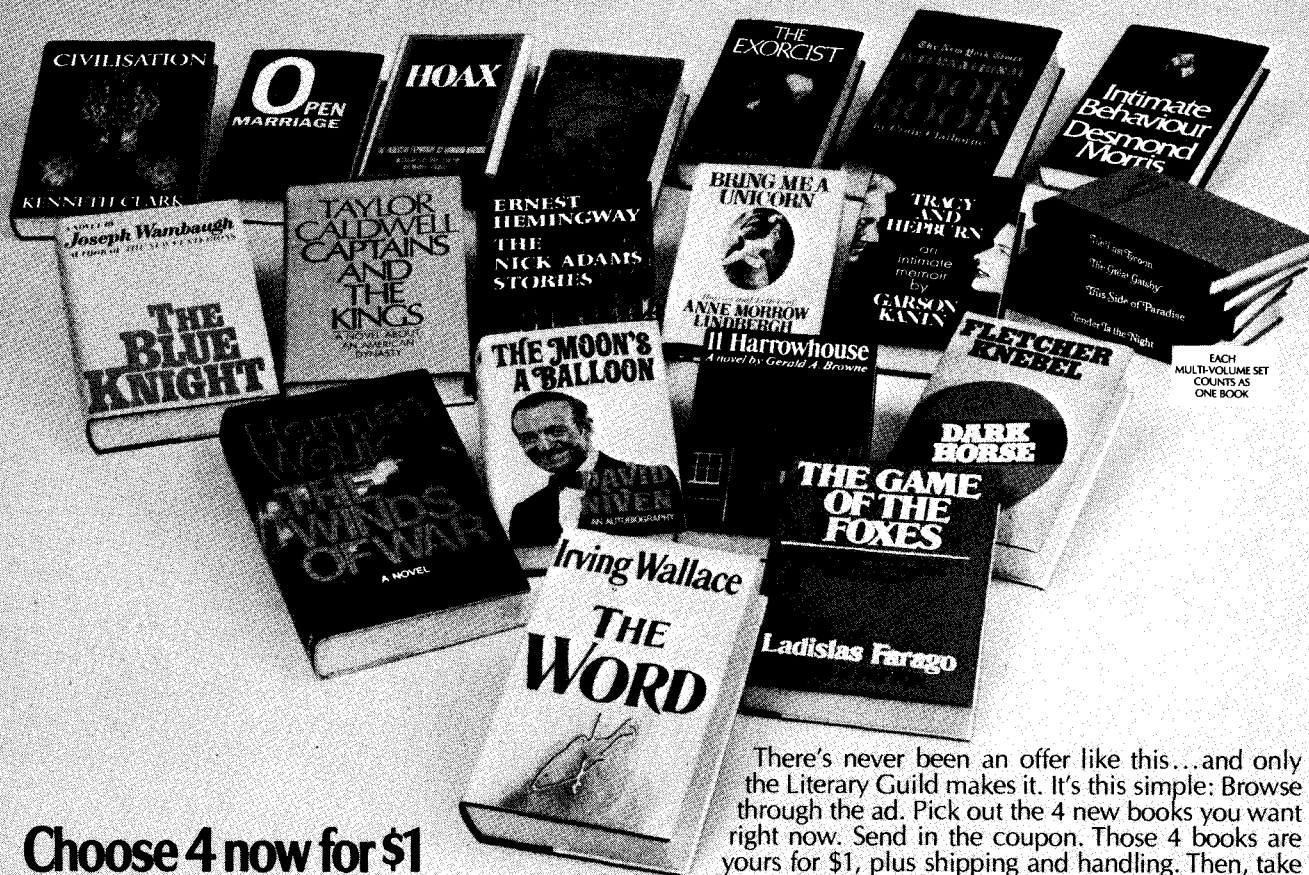
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